



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Intensive Activity Programme trial evaluation: Evidence synthesis

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Summary

The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) was a package of intensive support and structured activities that claimants were required to complete within 21 days of making a new Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claim, in addition to a full-time job search. Delivery of the IAP was led by Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches and was structured around a fixed curriculum of workshops, work at home activities and follow-up meetings with Work Coaches. The IAP was designed to facilitate effective full-time job seeking from the earliest stage of a claim, and therefore accelerate movement into work and off unemployment benefit.

For six months from Spring 2015 the IAP was implemented by DWP as a randomised controlled trial across seven Jobcentre Plus offices to fully assess its impact on benefit and employment outcomes, as well as claimant and staff experiences of the programme. The findings presented in this report provide a summary of the evidence across all available strands of research to date.

For greater detail on the qualitative research with claimants undertaken by the Institute of Employment Studies please refer to the [IAP Trial Evaluation: Claimant Research Report](#)

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Executive Summary

The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) was a package of intensive support and structured activities that claimants were required to complete within 21 days of making a new claim. It was designed to facilitate effective full-time job-seeking from the earliest stage of the claim, thereby accelerating movement into work and off unemployment benefit.

Claimants were required to complete the IAP curriculum while also conducting a comprehensive job search. To support and monitor progress, claimants had face-to-face meetings with Work Coaches, and took part in group workshops which focused on the curriculum (Chapter 1)

For six months from Spring 2015 the IAP was implemented by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as a randomised controlled trial across seven Jobcentre Plus offices to fully assess its impact. The evaluation strategy involved various quantitative and qualitative strands of research (Chapter 2). Findings in this report explore IAP in terms of programme experience and delivery for staff and claimants, the effect on claimants' attitude and confidence toward job seeking, and claimant employment outcomes and movement off benefits. Research strands led by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) were the development of a theory of change, longitudinal claimant interviews, and observations of IAP services in Jobcentre Plus offices. Strands led by DWP included staff interviews, a quantitative assessment of benefit and employment impacts and sub-group analysis. For further detail on claimant research, please see the [IAP Claimant Research Report](#)

The IAP theory of change

Prior to fieldwork, a theoretical model known as a theory of change was developed to detail the intended ways in which the IAP would progress claimants (Chapter 3). This acted as the benchmark against which claimant experiences were evaluated, to assess whether the intervention was working as the model's assumptions intended.

Key assumptions of the theory of change included that:

- The IAP would support individuals to become effective, active and persistent jobseekers from the earliest stage of their claim. As such, it would accelerate entry into employment and the end of their claims.
- The IAP would assist claimants to find sustainable work, not just any job, and equip them with the skills to master transitions between employers. Claimants would recall the IAP activities and would be effective in applying them in future situations.

- The planned provision would be tailored towards individuals' skills and capabilities and would encourage attention to quality of job seeking activities.
- Through engaging with IAP, individuals' confidence and ownership of their job search would increase and they would display more positive attitudes to the process – because they understood it better.
- While the curriculum would not be needed in full by all claimants, all would be able to benefit from some learning that it delivered.
- Work Coaches would be at the heart of IAP, emanating the Jobcentre Plus cultural transformation and leading coaching and quality-checking activities that encouraged continuous improvement in job search activities.
- During an Initial Work Search Interview (IWSI) Work Coaches would encourage claimants to want to engage with the IAP for the benefits they would gain. As such Work Coaches would make a sell without needing to mandate claimants to attend.
- Being part of IAP workshops would have several positive effects: workshops would deliver hints and tips on job seeking, being part of a group would reduce any sense of isolation in unemployment while also developing positive social norms.
- The workshop environment would foster collaboration and sharing of ideas and experiences, while networking space would allow claimants to continue discussions with peers after workshops.
- While few obstacles to the achievement of eventual outcomes were perceived, local labour market, logistical issues and the adequacy of staff training were identified.

Key findings

IAP met the core ambitions of the theory of change. IAP is shown to support individuals to become effective, active jobseekers from the earliest stage of their claim. Impact analysis indicated that the IAP group were more likely to be off benefit and in work by the fifth week of their claim, indicating that IAP had accelerated movement into work and off benefit (Section 6.3).

Longer-term findings suggest that IAP's effects are sustained; the persistence of a positive effect over the first nine months from the point of claim suggests a long-term role of IAP in moving more claimants towards sustainable employment (Chapter 6). IAP claimants on average spent around 11 more days off benefit than business as usual (BAU) claimants in the first 9 months since making their claim. The uncertainty in the data indicates that the true figure is likely to be at least 5.5 days and no greater than 17. No significant differences between impacts of different sub-groups were found (Section 6.34).

Many staff felt able to draw on 'selling points' of IAP, emphasising its interactivity and intensive skills development, and many claimants were motivated at the outset without Work Coaches having to mandate their attendance. However, this approach

sometimes fell flat when claimants noticed an emphasis on sanctions in letters, or felt that Work Coaches failed to communicate IAP's benefits in detail (Section 4.2.2).

Most claimants either learnt new skills or welcomed the opportunity to revise their job search techniques (Section 4.4). The value of the IAP curriculum and Getting Started Handbook did depend on the existing job search competency of claimants (Sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.2).

Work Coaches successfully facilitated knowledge sharing between claimants in workshops, rather than instructing them. This new approach was welcomed by both staff and claimants and many claimants drew substantial benefits from workshops (Section 4.3.3). Claimants and staff research suggested that key driving factors of successful group sessions included that facilitators shared and tailored the IAP curriculum to individual circumstance, and that the diversity in age and experience of claimants which enabled knowledge-sharing between participants and the creation of a positive learning environment. For claimants with interest or experience in specialist sectors, or who displayed existing proficiency in jobseeking, however, the sessions were felt to be less useful.

Staff successfully created environments that fostered interaction and collaboration, and while some claimants were difficult to engage, most drew significant benefits from the workshops. Staff felt that the comfortable environment encouraged claimants to contribute.

Follow-up one-to-one meetings were important to sustaining claimants' initial progress made in work at home activities and workshops, however some claimants felt this feedback was not sufficiently detailed or focused on their input to tasks (Section 4.3.5).

After the IAP workshops, many claimants exhibited improvements in confidence and enthusiasm for job seeking. Many IAP claimants believed that they had picked up several hints and tips from the programme, and that their applications and search strategy had improved (Section 4.4). Those interviewed aged 45+ were less likely than younger claimants to attribute improvements to IAP.

Staff viewed IAP positively, and indicated increased job satisfaction. They acknowledged and welcomed the cultural change towards facilitation, and felt that the curriculum was comprehensive and useful for most claimants (Chapter 5). Views varied on whether discretion should be given to staff to target parts of the curriculum to claimants who they believed would benefit most.

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Authors

This report was prepared by Will Downes and Martin Moran and who are analysts at the Department for Work and Pensions.

Some sections of this report have been adapted from the Intensive Activity Programme Trial Evaluation: Claimant Research Report, which was produced by Becci Newton, Jonathan Buzzeo, Rosa Marvell, Ellie Snowden and Alice Broughton of the Institute of Employment Studies.

Glossary of terms

Institute for Employment Studies (IES)	An independent, apolitical, international centre of research and consultancy in public employment policy and HR issues. Its focus of knowledge is on employment and training policy, the operation of labour markets, and HR planning and development.
Intensive Activity Programme (IAP)	A package of intensive support for new claims designed to accelerate movement into work and off unemployment benefits.
Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)	A benefit paid to people who are unemployed and actively seeking work.
Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It provides services that support people of working age from welfare into work, and helps employers to fill their vacancies.
Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT)	A scientific experiment, where the target population is randomly allocated to either the treatment under study or a control group (also referred to as business as usual (BAU)). When implemented correctly, random allocation is a robust method which allows differences measured between groups to be attributed to the effects of the intervention alone.
The STAR Method	An approach most commonly used in job interviews to give evidence related to competency. Experience is explained in terms of situation, task, action and result.
Universal Credit (UC)	A single monthly payment for people in or out of work, which merges together some of the benefits and tax credits currently being received separately.

List of Abbreviations

BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
BAU	Business as Usual
CC	Claimant Commitment
ESA	Employment and Support Allowance
FTA	Failure to Attend
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.
IAP	Intensive Activity Programme
IES	Institute for Employment Studies
IWSI	initial Work Search Interview
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
LDD	Learning Disability or Difficulty
LMS	Labour Market System
NiNo	National Insurance Number
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
STAR	Situation, Task, Action, Result
UC	Universal Credit
UJ	Universal Jobmatch
WP	Work Programme

1 Introduction

The Intensive Activity Programme was a new provision that aimed to increase the effectiveness of claimants' job seeking skills from the earliest point in their claim. This chapter outlines the genesis and design of the IAP programme including how staff were prepared to deliver it.¹

1.1 The Intensive Activity Programme

The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) was a package of intensive support and structured activities that claimants were required to complete within 21 days of making a new claim. It was designed to facilitate effective full-time job seeking from the earliest stage of the claim thus accelerating the movement into work and off unemployment benefit. The support consisted of a curriculum delivered through facilitated workshops and one-to-one coaching support from Jobcentre Plus staff.

It was introduced as a trial with proof of concept testing prior to a test implementation in the form of a randomised controlled trial. This section gives a brief account of the policy's development.

The IAP was first trialled and assessed as a **proof of concept** in North London Jobcentre Plus offices in August 2013 with new Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants eligible for support. The IAP package comprised some 70 hours of support and activities. Informal feedback gathered by DWP researchers revealed both claimant and staff enthusiasm for this new model, which was perceived to break traditions of directive information transmission, replacing them with a more facilitative coaching style in which claimants would discuss and take greater ownership of their job search.

From Spring 2015, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) implemented the IAP as part of a large-scale **randomised controlled trial (RCT)** to more thoroughly assess its impact and understand more about how IAP worked (or did not work) for claimants with different personal and labour market characteristics. Please see the trial methodology in chapter two for further information on the aims and design of the evaluation.

¹ This chapter has been adapted from the externally commissioned claimant research report produced by the Institute of Employment Studies (IES).

1.1.1 IAP support and activities

As noted, the Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) required claimants to complete a fixed curriculum that comprised a series of activities designed to establish effective, full time job seeking from the earliest stage of the claim. Through this, the IAP intended to increase the speed of claimants' movement towards and into work and off welfare benefits. The curriculum activities took place, typically, over the first three weeks of the claim during which claimants were also required to conduct a comprehensive job search. To support and monitor their progress, claimants also had face-to-face meetings with their Work Coaches, and took part in group workshops which focused on elements of the curriculum.

The IAP curriculum included job search skills self-assessments, application processes and job search skills and similar activities to ensure that jobseekers could implement a high quality job search with appropriate intensity (see figure 1.1).

Specifically, **Workshop 1** covered: CVs and covering letters, application forms, interview skills, internet job search, and references.

Workshop 2 focused on the work-search area and its implications, speculative applications, recruitment agencies, and the work search diary which IAP claimants were required to complete.

The **relationship** between the Work Coach and the claimant was also a central element of instilling effective and persistent job seeking behaviours. To do this, IAP aimed for this relationship to be one that actively coached and addressed weaknesses as well as minimised any emphasis on conditionality. In order to perform this role, IAP Work Coaches were involved in training to gain knowledge and competence in the use of behavioural and other coaching techniques (see section 1.1.2), and in using facilitative approaches in meetings and the workshops.

Following each workshop, claimants would receive a follow-up telephone call to check how they were getting on with the work at home expected of them. This formed part of the three week intensive experience.

Following this, the meetings with IAP Work Coaches were intended to continue for the duration of the claim and thus, IAP would be a continuous process from the earliest part of the claim until it was ended by entry to employment or off flow from benefits. The schematic for IAP is shown in Figure 1.1.

In respect of **conditionality** it was intended that Work Coaches would encourage claimants to participate in the IAP through stressing the benefits of the programme. However, Work Coaches could, if necessary, mandate claimants to specific elements of IAP through a Jobseeker's Direction. They would do this only if it became clear that a claimant was not engaging voluntarily, which would be demonstrated by a claimant failing to attend a group session or a meeting with their Work Coach or not undertaking activities associated with the curriculum.

1.1.2 Up-skilling staff to deliver IAP

As part of the trial, a bespoke training package was developed for Work Coaches delivering IAP which focused on them using behavioural science and other coaching techniques within interactions with IAP claimants. The expectation was that Work Coaches would be skilled in using these alongside more standard interviewing techniques. Techniques included in the training materials were:

- **Anchoring** – setting high but realistic expectations for desired behaviours and actions often results in greater effort to achieve those behaviours or actions.
- **Social norming** – people are strongly influenced to conform to what they believe the normal or acceptable behaviour to be. Setting out what most successful jobseekers do creates a standard for claimants to achieve or work towards.
- **Nudging** – positive reinforcement and indirect suggestions which aim to achieve voluntary compliance with suggested actions for example, by asking claimants to identify what they can do, then getting them to agree to commit to completing this action.
- **Applying the quality ruler** – this technique encourages people to reflect upon and score – on a scale of one to ten – the quality of what they have achieved and to consider how they could improve on this self-assessed quality score.
- **Coaching** – this entails Work Coaches entering into a positive engagement with claimants, seeking to acknowledge their activities to find work as well as identifying further activities which improve claimants' ability to get work. Similarly, Work Coaches encourage claimants to reflect on how they can be more productive, and thus enable claimants to focus their effort more effectively.

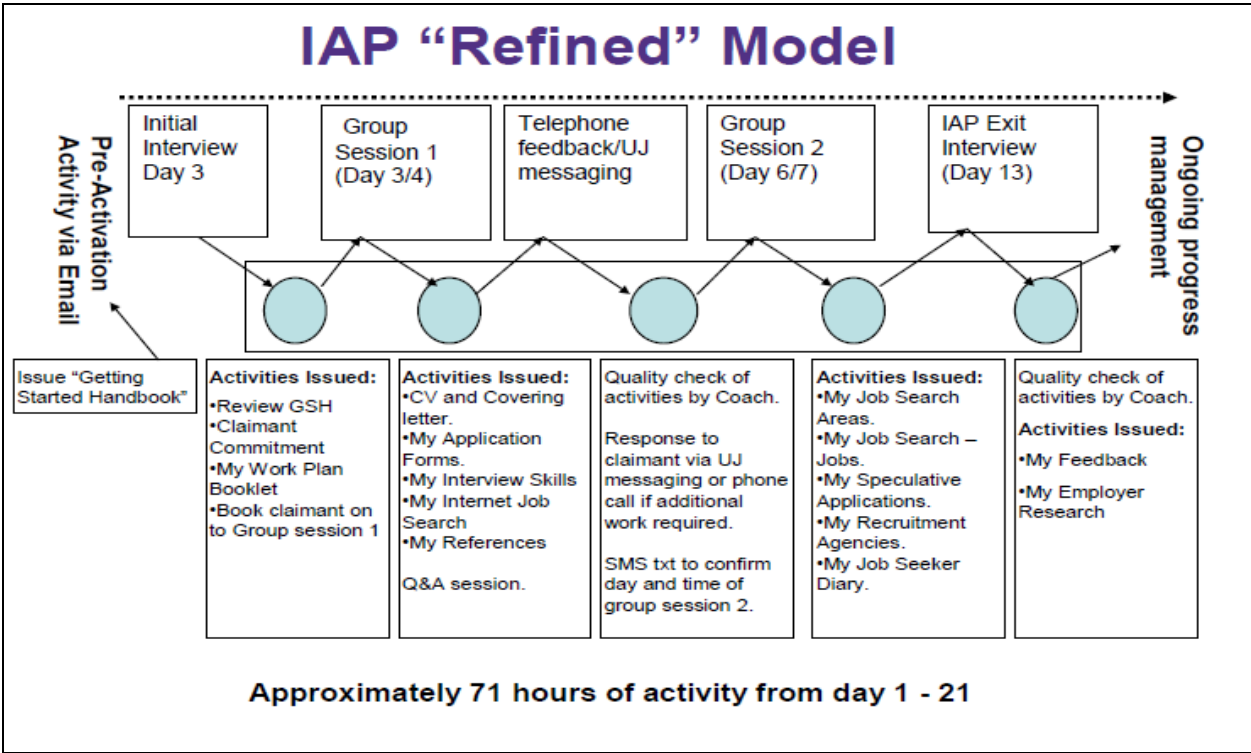
1.1.3 Difference from business as usual

To understand more fully the unique experience of IAP, it is worth setting out the standard Jobcentre Plus offer for new JSA claimants, which was offered to the control group as part of the randomised controlled trial testing of IAP (known as Business as Usual (BAU) support). This standard offer also applied to those in the IAP participant group, who were to experience the IAP curriculum, workshops and coaching in addition to it.

All new claimants joined what was known as the Day 1 Offer. Under this, and during the first three weeks of their JSA claim, claimants experienced: an initial Jobseeker Interview (New Claim), fortnightly work search reviews and flexible interventions led by a Work Coach. The length and frequency of these interventions was at the discretion of Work Coaches, who determined the level of support that each claimant needed. Work Coaches also had access to local provision and support to which they could refer claimants. This could include, for example, a CV appointment with a National Careers Service (NCS) Advisor. In addition, Work Coaches could access a flexible support fund (FSF) in order to remove any potential barriers to work that claimants faced. Permitted use of this fund included covering the costs of interview or work clothes, or costs of travelling to interviews.

It was also fairly common for Jobcentre Plus offices to arrange Group Information Sessions (GIS) for new claimants. These sessions were used as a device to inform groups of claimants about the support available through Jobcentre Plus, as well as their responsibility to seek work and engage with this support offer as a condition of their receiving benefit. The key aim of these sessions was to supply the crucial information that claimants needed, in an accessible and consistent manner, at an early point in their claim.

Figure 1.1 The IAP schematic



1.2 Report structure

The methodology used in this research is detailed in **Chapter 2**. This includes the overall evaluation strategy, as well as the research approach for the individual strands of research.

In **Chapter 3**, an outline of the theory of change is given, summarised from the work undertaken as part of the externally commissioned claimant research. This is a model of how IAP was intended to work, and is used as a benchmark against which the qualitative findings for the claimant research are compared. For the fully detailed theory of change, please see the IAP Claimant Research Report.

Chapter 4 presents a synthesis of the available research findings on the IAP. This provides a rounded view of the IAP, drawing on claimant, staff and impact research.

In **Chapter 5**, the findings from the staff interviews are given in greater detail.

In **Chapter 6**, the impact analysis is presented. This includes impact on benefit receipt, employment outcomes, cumulative impacts as well as subgroup analysis.

Appendices including research materials are available at the back of the report.

The claimant research referenced in this report, undertaken by IES, has been published in greater detail in a [separate standalone report](#)

2 Methodology

This section describes key data collection and analysis methods drawn upon in this report. These include staff and claimant interviews, observations of Intensive Activity Programme workshops and staff-claimant appointments, and assessment of benefit and employment impact.

2.1 Evaluation strategy

The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) was implemented as a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) between March and September 2015. To understand its impact and whether it accelerated entry to employment or off-flow from benefits, the evaluation strategy involved gathering quantitative and qualitative evidence. This comprised seven strands with two elements led by independent researchers at the Institute for Employment Studies (IES):

1. Monitoring the experimental data and the trial implementation (DWP)
2. Impact assessment and cost benefit analysis (DWP)
3. Clerical data tool for segmentation analysis (DWP)
4. In-house qualitative research with Jobcentre Plus staff (DWP)
5. Theory of change development (IES)
6. Qualitative research with claimants (IES)

For further detail on strands led by IES, see the [IAP Claimant Research Report](#)

This report brings together the findings from strands 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and an interim impact assessment based on the first nine months of available data. A final impact assessment, cost benefit analysis and segmentation analysis are not yet available as not all claimants have completed the follow-up period.

2.1.1 Headline trial aims

The aims for the IAP evaluation and the data available to address these in this report are outlined below:

- **To determine whether IAP is effective in terms of movements off benefit and/or into employment.** To assess this, an RCT approach provided a counterfactual² against which the outcomes for those receiving IAP could be compared. Impact analysis, using Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) administrative data and employment data from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), would thereby be able to assess how IAP compares to business as usual (BAU) in moving claimants off benefit and/or into employment.
- **To determine whether IAP provides value for money to the Department.** Benefit payment data collected would provide the option of performing a cost-benefit analysis to indicate whether IAP was cost effective compared to BAU.
- **To provide evidence on which particular groups or characteristics IAP is more effective for.** This was explored through in-depth interviews with claimants and staff, as well as quantitative sub-group impact analysis. Few exemptions to the eligibility criteria for IAP were made in order for as diverse a range of different claimants' experiences and outcomes to be assessed.
- **To understand the nature of the support being offered and the experience of the programme from both claimant and staff perspectives.** This was explored through in-depth interviews with claimants and staff, as well as observations of IAP delivery.
- **To understand intermediate outcomes such as improved job seeking skills and attitudes to work.** To assess this, the claimant research approach was structured using a theory of change and drew on behavioural insights literature to identify and compare intended and actual changes in claimant attitudes, self-efficacy, knowledge and behaviours.

2.2 Trial design

IAP was tested as a randomised controlled trial. It was trialled amongst new claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), as Universal Credit was still being introduced on a staged basis, and the full range of claimant types would not be available to the trial if new claimants of UC were the target. In scope of the trial were claimants making new or repeat JSA claims whose Initial Work Search Interviews

² A counterfactual is a statistically reliable estimate of what the outcomes would be for a same group of claimants if they had received business as usual (BAU) support rather than an intervention.

(IWSIs) took place between 16th March 2015 and 15th September 2015 across 7 Jobcentre Plus offices³.

2.2.1 Jobcentre Plus office selection

Offices were selected for evaluation findings to be able to reflect, in aggregate, national characteristics of claimants, so that findings could inform a decision on potential wider roll-out of the programme. Office selection therefore considered variation in terms of office size, geographic location, rural and urban location and claimant off-flow rate. Office selection also took care to avoid selecting offices running other trials that could risk contamination of the results, or offices in which BAU support was atypical to the rest of the country and would skew a measure of the outcome measures against which IAP outcomes would be compared.

2.2.2 Claimant recruitment and allocation to IAP and BAU

The trial aimed to include as full range of claimant types as possible to gather evidence on which claimants IAP was most suitable for. However, some claimants were excluded from participating in the trial. Those deemed out of scope were:

- Post Work Programme Support (PWPS) claimants; except those who broke the link with a previous PWPS claim who were subject to Day 1 conditionality.
- Day 1 referrals to the Work Programme, for example, prison leavers; as well as individuals who had not completed their full allocation on the Work Programme.⁴
- Those requiring support for English language including speakers of other languages (ESOL).

Trial participants were randomly allocated to either the intervention (IAP) or control (BAU) group based on their National Insurance Number (NiNo). Participants in the control group received BAU support for new JSA claimants in that office. Intervention participants underwent the IAP intervention except for a limited number who were exempted based on the discretion of the offices. Participants with a NiNo that ended in the digit 5 or above were allocated to IAP and the remainder were allocated to BAU. This approach to random allocation assumes that there is no relationship between the last digit of the NiNo and the likelihood of a labour market outcome; the last digit of the NiNo therefore acts as a pseudo random number generator. Other methods of random allocation are either administratively burdensome and/or difficult to validate within the framework of the Department's data protection protocols, hence our preferred choice of using the NiNo.

³ Bridlington, Hull Britannia House, Hull Market Place, Leeds Eastgate, Scarborough, Selby, Wakefield.

⁴ Claimants who volunteered for or were referred to the Work Programme spent up to two years in this provision. If their JSA claim ended, their entitlement was put on hold. Where claimants restarted their claim their entitlement to Work Programme support recommenced at that point.

As a result of random allocation, with a sufficiently large sample, the trial groups should on average have the same characteristics and would be expected, on average, to have the same employment and benefit outcomes in the absence of the IAP intervention. Therefore, any difference in the observed employment and benefit outcomes can in principle be attributed to effects of IAP. There is a chance that a difference is due to random variation in our allocation process but we are able to quantify the risk of that being the case and therefore assess how confident we can be that the difference is due to IAP and not random variation (see 6.2 for further detail on quantitative methods used to measure impact).

2.2.3 Trial design limitations

Jobcentre Plus staff who facilitated IAP workshops in the trial volunteered to do so. There may have been a systematic bias in the types of staff that volunteered for this role, meaning we cannot assume that staff who facilitated IAP workshops in this trial represented the variation in characteristics or skills of all Jobcentre Plus staff. If this bias occurred, this could limit the extent to which trial outcomes are indicative of outcomes that may be observed if IAP is rolled out and workshops are facilitated by a broader range of staff.

2.2.4 Trial monitoring

Implementation of the programme was monitored across sites. This was in order to ensure the trial was implemented as closely as possible to the programme design, so that any evaluation results could be attributed with confidence to that design.

2.3 Theory of change development

About theory of change

A theory of change maps the objectives of an intervention and details the causal steps intended to achieve them. A theory of change can be thought of as an agreed 'hypothesis' of how an intervention should work that maps a causal pathway from intended inputs to impacts, noting relevant contextual factors, potential risks, unknowns and the expected characteristic and behavioural variation of people involved and affected. It therefore allows the identification of gaps between planned and actual implementation and effects, and explores the extent, nature, causes and resulting impacts on outcomes.

The Institute of Employment Studies (IES) developed a theory of change for IAP. Their approach began by eliciting causal assumptions from policy documents and interviews with seven key stakeholders involved in the early stages of trial development. They then developed a model for how the intervention was intended to work, and a consensus-building workshop was used to agree this model and refine the key assumptions with these stakeholders in April 2015, prior to the claimant and staff fieldwork. This model was used as a benchmark against which the claimant

research undertaken by IES would be compared, to better understand the causal factors that contributed, or did not contribute to IAP's success or failure in achieving its intended outcomes.

The theory of change was developed with a focus on claimant behaviours, attempting to understand the expected starting and end points of claimants in terms of the behaviours and attitudes that they would exhibit, rather than only focusing on the outcomes they would achieve and the intermediate steps that would lead to these.

The core expectations of the IAP theory of change are summarised in chapter three. This acted as a benchmark for the qualitative research with claimants discussed in the next section.

Limitations of the theory of change

The theory of change was developed primarily for assessing claimants' progress made towards specified outcomes. It focused on their intermediate behaviours, attitudes and skills, and provided fewer detailed expectations of Work Coaches in these respects. For this reason, less analysis of the theory of change is provided in the staff research chapter (Chapter 5). However, it did refer to critical aspects of Work Coach behaviour where these were anticipated to affect claimant outcomes.

2.4 Qualitative research methods

2.4.1 Claimant research

To complement the research strands undertaken by the Department, IES were commissioned to undertake longitudinal in-depth interviews with claimants and structured, observational research in three Jobcentre Plus offices delivering the IAP. Sites were selected to represent different labour market conditions. A more detailed description of the claimant research methodology is available in the claimant research report, published alongside this one.

The claimant research aimed to provide evidence on the nature of support being offered within the IAP programme; claimants' perceptions of effectiveness of the programme; and its role in moving claimants closer to the labour market. In order to assess the role of attitudes and behaviours in detail, and how these compared to the expectations of the theory of change, research tools were developed drawing on behavioural insights literature and frameworks.

The longitudinal approach to interviews was designed to measure changes in claimant knowledge and awareness of job seeking skills, self-efficacy, attitudes and motivation between starting IAP and after having completed the initial weeks of the intensive period.

61 claimants were interviewed, of which 42 were receiving IAP, 4 had failed to attend an IAP workshop, and 15 were receiving BAU. The first wave of interviews took place during the first few weeks of the claim, with the second wave following these up

6 weeks later. Observations were made of 15 initial interviews, 10 on-going interviews and 10 workshops.

Limitations of the claimant research

Attrition between the two waves of interviews was highest amongst individuals who had moved into employment, which means the research was less able to comment on the effect of IAP on this group than others.

The number of interviews with participants receiving BAU was small compared to the number of interviews with the IAP participant group, meaning that findings for this group must be considered indicative.

While initial interviews with claimants took place close to their experience of the IAP workshops, follow-up interviews happened six to eight weeks after this. While this time was sufficient to assess some intermediate behavioural outcomes of IAP, it was unlikely that the research would capture sustained behavioural outcomes.

2.4.2 Jobcentre Plus staff research

DWP researchers conducted 17 qualitative in-depth interviews with Jobcentre Plus staff delivering IAP across four IAP trial sites in order to capture a range of staff perspectives. Work Coaches and Work Service Managers were interviewed. Systematic framework analysis was used to categorise themes from interview recordings. Further detail on staff research methodology is provided in Chapter 5.

2.4.3 Limitations of qualitative research

The methodology used for qualitative research with claimants and staff was designed to provide robust evidence on the implementation and effectiveness of the IAP. The qualitative research was not designed to quantify how many individuals held particular views. Instead, the intention was to capture the diversity of views and experiences in order to generate a full picture of the operation of the programme.

2.5 Quantitative Research Methods

Participants in the study were randomly allocated to receive either IAP or BAU. Benefit receipt data for these claimants was drawn from a DWP administrative systems, and employment data was drawn from HMRC P45 records. In total 12,143 individuals were represented in the data analysed. A full overview of the quantitative methodology and data presented in this report is provided in section 6.2.

A data collection tool for segmentation analysis was developed to investigate what characteristics were associated with the degree of responsiveness to IAP. Data is not yet complete and has not been analysed at the time of reporting, and is therefore not included in this publication.

3 The IAP Theory of Change

Below is a summary of the core assumptions of the Intensive Activity Programme theory of change developed by the Institute for Employment Studies. The full theory of change is detailed in the claimant research report, published alongside this one.

3.1.1 Core assumptions of the theory of change

The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) would support individuals to become effective, active and persistent jobseekers from the earliest stage of their claim. As such, it would accelerate entry into employment and the end of their claims. It would assist claimants to find sustainable work, not just any job, and equip them with the skills to master transitions between employers. Claimants would recall the IAP activities and would be effective in applying them in future situations. The planned provision would be tailored towards individuals' skills and capabilities and would encourage attention to quality of job seeking activities.

Through engaging with IAP, individuals' confidence and ownership of their job search would increase and they would display more positive attitudes to the process. While the curriculum would not be needed in full by all claimants, all would be able to benefit from some learning that it delivered.

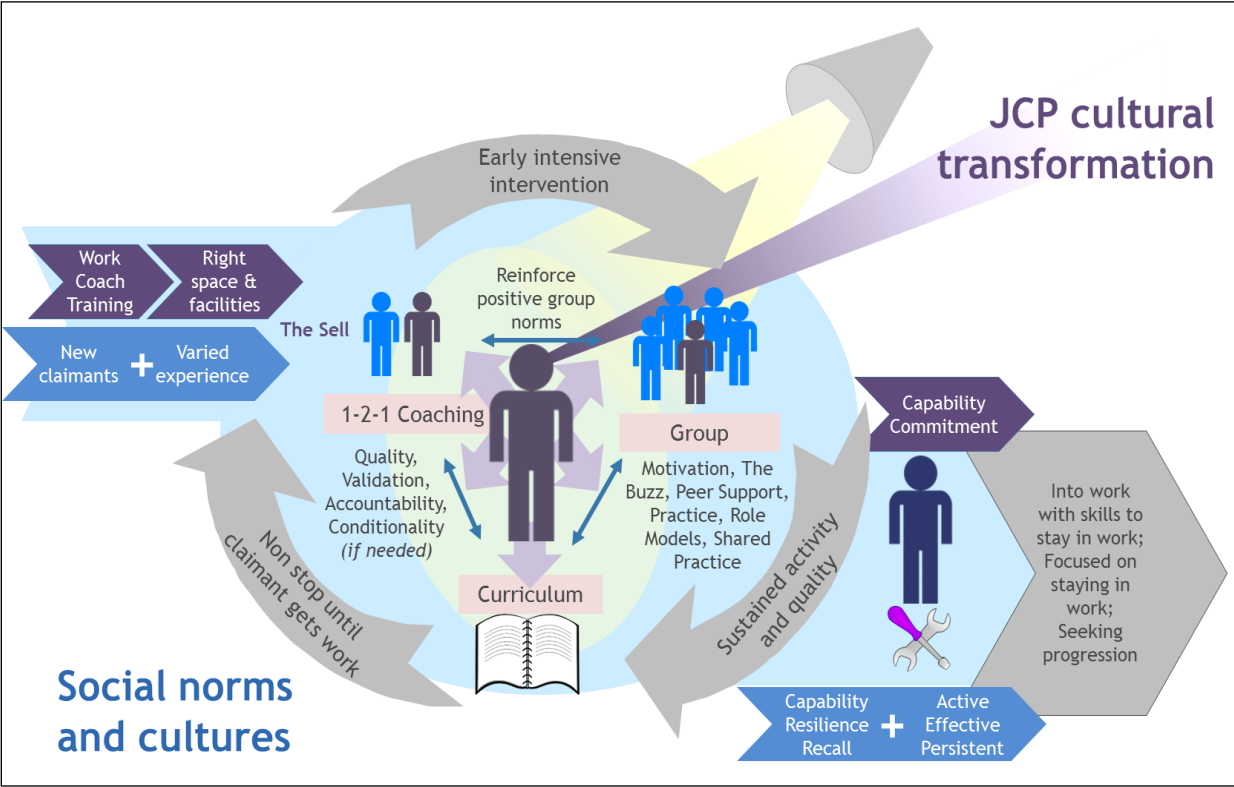
Work Coaches would be at the heart of IAP, leading coaching and quality-checking activities that encouraged continuous improvement in job search activities. During an Initial Work Search Interview (IWSI) Work Coaches would encourage claimants to want to voluntarily engage with the IAP for the benefits they would gain.

Being part of IAP workshops would have several positive effects: workshops would deliver hints and tips on job seeking, being part of a group would reduce any sense of isolation in unemployment while also developing positive social norms. The workshop environment would foster collaboration and sharing of ideas and experiences, while networking space would allow claimants to continue discussions with peers after workshops.

3.1.2 The IAP theory of change model

The Institute for Employment Studies (IES) developed the model in Figure 3.1 to illustrate the core expectations of the theory of change. The model shows the claimant journey through IAP; entering from the left, participating in workshops, the curriculum and coaching in the centre - each of which are underpinned by the support of Work Coaches, the cultural change towards a facilitative approach to working with claimants, and the social norms expected to form in workshops. The cyclical arrows denote the intention of maintained support and a sustained effect of IAP, with claimant outcomes represented to the right.

Figure 3.1 The IAP theory of change model



4 IAP Evidence Synthesis

This chapter summarises the key findings from the claimant, staff and impact research, and compares these against the assumptions of the theory of change to give a rounded assessment of the Intensive Activity Programme.

4.1 Key findings

- The Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) met the core ambitions of the theory of change, and is shown to support individuals to become effective jobseekers from the earliest stage of their claim. Impact data provided supportive evidence that IAP accelerated entry into employment as well as off benefit.
- The IAP group were approximately 7 (± 2) percentage points more likely to be off benefit and 3.5 (± 0.5) percentage points more likely to be in work by the fifth week of their claim compared to claimants receiving business as usual support (BAU). The persistence of a positive effect suggests that IAP's effects are sustained. The IAP group were found to spend on average 11 (± 6) fewer days on benefit, and 10 (± 6) more days in employment after nine months.
- Many Work Coaches felt able to draw on 'selling points' of IAP, emphasising interactivity and intensive skills development to engage claimants, rather than relying on conditionality, and many claimants were motivated at the outset.
- Most claimants interviewed either learnt new skills or welcomed the opportunity to revise their job seeking techniques. However, the value of the IAP curriculum and products did depend on the existing job search competency of claimants.
- Many claimants exhibited improvements in confidence and enthusiasm for job seeking. Those interviewed aged 45+ were less likely than younger claimants to attribute improvements to IAP.
- Work Coaches successfully facilitated interaction and knowledge sharing between claimants in workshops, and many claimants drew significant benefits from these sessions.
- Follow-up one-to-one meetings were important for sustaining claimants' initial progress, however some claimants felt this feedback was not sufficiently detailed or focused on their input to tasks.
- Staff gave largely positive views of IAP and welcomed the cultural change towards facilitative coaching.

- Overall, claimant and staff reactions to IAP were largely positive and showed that IAP had generally worked in the core ways envisaged by the theory of change, albeit with some areas for improvement identified. In particular, the collaborative workshops and the facilitate approach to coaching were found to be key drivers of success for IAP. Coupled with impacts on employment and benefit outcomes, the IAP was shown to be an effective programme that was well received by both claimants and staff.

4.2 Entry into IAP

This section provides a summary of the evidence on the two-day IAP training staff received, and the Initial Work Search Interview (IWSI). The evidence draws on findings from interviews with claimants as staff, as well as IAP delivery observations.

4.2.1 Work Coach Training

The training aimed to give staff an understanding of the IAP process, to introduce them to workshop facilitation skills and to shift the emphasis of coaching away from telling claimants what to do (transmission) to enabling autonomous engagement and ownership of job seeking (facilitation). The theory of change highlighted that the new principles introduced through the two day training were pivotal to the ethos and success of IAP. Work Coaches were largely content with the two day IAP training they received and staff and claimants provided substantial evidence that the principles of facilitation were welcomed and implemented. Some staff were more comfortable than others with the transition to a 'facilitator' role. In these cases, confidence appeared to be linked to previous experience of running group sessions.

4.2.2 Selling IAP at the IWSI

The theory of change stated that the IWSI would play an important role as the time in which Work Coaches would sell IAP, attempt to generate autonomous engagement from claimants, and begin personalising support to claimants. It expected Work Coaches to persuade claimants of the value of participation and to engage them without using mandation to motivate their attendance.

Many staff felt able to draw on selling points of IAP during the IWSI, emphasising the interactivity and intensive skills development to engage claimants, rather than relying on conditionality, and many claimants were motivated at the outset. However, some claimants did not perceive their participation to be voluntary when they noticed an emphasis on sanctions in letters, or felt Work Coaches failed to communicate IAP's benefits in detail. Some staff reported difficulty in convincing some claimants that IAP would be useful or helpful to them.

Observations indicated that claimants were advised that they would pick up some useful hints and tips about their work-related activities in the workshops, and they would be expected to complete additional work on top of this. However, some claimants reported that Work Coaches had not gone into detail about benefits of IAP which had made it harder for them to understand how they would benefit from participation. Some claimants believed that the IAP had not been well explained, but that they were prepared to attend in order to avoid the risk of sanctioning as well as to understand any benefits that could arise.

Many claimants who were interviewed indicated that they welcomed an intensive start to their claiming experience to bring them up to speed with current job seeking techniques, and the idea of being able to learn from others. Others perceived the intensity with which IAP tasks were to be completed as not taking into account what claimants themselves felt capable of achieving.

It was not clearly apparent across the evidence that Work Coaches were able to begin personalising support to claimants during the IWSI. While staff mentioned that the Getting Started Handbook had sometimes been helpful in this regard to understand claimants' needs before the IWSI, some felt they had too little time to discuss the handbook at the initial interview (see section 4.3.2).

4.3 The three week experience

This section provides a summary of the evidence on the IAP service package⁵ as delivered through the curriculum, supporting products, activities, workshops and follow-up appointments. The evidence draws on findings from interviews with claimants and staff, as well as IAP delivery observations.

4.3.1 The IAP curriculum

Most claimants either learnt new job search techniques from the curriculum or welcomed the opportunity to revise their existing skills. Elements of the curriculum were perceived to be most useful by claimants when they presented new job search approaches or techniques that individuals had previously been unaware of or had never considered using. Though this was generally true across ages, younger claimants who were interviewed appeared to have found more skills in the curriculum that were novel to them compared to other age groups.

Some claimants welcomed that IAP clarified Jobcentre Plus expectations of what activities a job search could include, such as researching employers and preparing for interviews.

⁵ See section 1.1.1 for an overview of the IAP service package

Where claimants expressed negative views on the content, this was generally because they already felt familiar with practicing the approaches discussed, believed that these were not relevant to their job-goals or personal circumstances, or already had the relevant skills. However, others appreciated the opportunity to revise and refine job search techniques.

Staff had varied views on what modules were most helpful; but it was noted that IAP provided comprehensive support. However, the My CV, Interview Skills, Application Forms, and Covering Letters modules were viewed by staff as particularly important modules within the curriculum because they were viewed by these staff as providing the basic skills that should be established as soon as possible in the course of a job search.

Staff also noted that the benefit derived from certain modules was dependent on claimants' previous skills and experience, for example, that claimants' existing information technology (IT) capability impacted on what claimants could gain from the My Internet Work Search module. Some suggested that IAP should allow Work Coaches the flexibility to target modules at those claimants who would gain the most from a particular module. It was also noted though, that the needs of claimants were not always identifiable early on, or in the IWSI.

4.3.2 Getting Started Handbook

The Getting Started Handbook was to be issued to each participant at the start of their claim. Its purpose was to set out the claimant's plan of action, to get claimants thinking about quality of work-related activity, aid organisation and to help them better understand their responsibilities. Claimants and staff indicated that the value of the Getting Started Handbook did depend on the existing job search competency of claimants. Work Coaches reported asking claimants to fill in as much as they could before attending their next meeting. Some claimants felt there was not sufficient time between meetings to consider the content. Staff reflected that this may have been due to lack of clarity on what was expected from claimants, or because it replicated the material covered in the workshops.

Staff views on and usage of the Handbook were mixed. It was described as a useful tool to find out about claimants' job search skills and identify skills gaps. Others stated that while they liked the concept, it was impractical and put too much focus on ticking off tasks. In many cases the Handbooks were not completed or returned.

The externally commissioned contractors recommended improving the function of the Getting Started Handbook, to enable a self-assessment of job seeking skills at the beginning of claims. Some staff suggested targeting the Handbook at those who were new to unemployment.

4.3.3 Workshops

Workshop Facilitation

The theory of change expected that facilitators would explore claimants' understanding of their responsibilities and tailor workshop content from the curriculum to their views and experiences to create an interactive, personalised and engaging experience. Evidence suggested that Work Coaches succeeded in this respect. Facilitators avoided prescribing tips to claimants directly, and delivered workshops in line with the cultural change from transmission to facilitation that the theory of change envisioned. Facilitators were viewed most positively by claimants when they tailored the workshops to claimants' own circumstances.

The theory of change also anticipated that the IAP workshops would encourage bonds to form between claimants, to enable the creation of social norms about what being an active and effective job seeker entailed. Claimants indicated that a sense of equality was established through a relatively informal atmosphere, facilitators' encouragement of input from all group members and in ensuring their input was valued. Many claimants reported that the workshop experience was thereby inclusive and comfortable. Claimant research indicated this had helped reduce the sense of isolation that can occur as a result of unemployment, through highlighting how unemployment could affect people in all occupations and social situations.

As intended, collaborative discussion of what job seeking entailed was facilitated by an atmosphere of knowledge-sharing, and there was substantial evidence that most claimants did pick up tips and ideas from each other. Staff recognised the interactive elements of the workshops as key to their success and provided examples of claimants sharing job search tips and vacancy details. Some Work Coaches noted that information coming from other claimants was received with more credibility, and could increase the credibility of job search methods described by the facilitator.

Claimants acknowledged difficulty on the part of facilitators to manage groups in cases where several participants were disengaged. This matched staff experiences that identified the least successful workshops as those in which claimants were passive and expected the facilitator to tell them what to do. Staff reported that the hardest to engage were those who had previously received Employment and Support Allowance and younger claimants.

Some Work Coaches reported difficulty in maintaining claimant engagement over the 90 minute duration of the workshops. Some also noted that it was difficult to provide sufficient time for discussion of key topics given the amount of content to be covered in each workshop.

The claimant interviews suggested that how IAP-related activities were introduced to claimants in the workshop and how well their purpose was explained appeared to impact on the perceived relevance of activities and the extent to which claimants engaged with them. However, claimants generally viewed facilitators as competent and knowledgeable even when content was clearly new to them. A number of staff wanted more control over the content of the workshops, to tailor them to their local

labour market as well as particular needs of claimants. Some also suggested that particular claimants would benefit from one-to-one support prior to workshops to focus on particular skills gaps (e.g. if they did not have a CV). Claimant research suggested that organising participants based on employment sector experience or interest could have enhanced the value and relevance of the workshops to some groups of participants.

Workshop Dynamics

The intention of having mixed groups in workshops was to facilitate knowledge sharing between people with varying experiences and to encourage mutual learning. Diversity in experience appeared to be a key driver of workshop success.

Staff reported that workshops were typically mixed groups with a range of characteristics in terms of interview experience, computer skills, employment history, and how outgoing they were. This was thought by staff to create an open and collaborative atmosphere. There was substantial evidence from staff and claimant interviews of information being shared between claimants with some providing advice and support to others based on their prior experiences.

Group size was noted by staff to affect the success of workshops. Views of facilitators varied, as some preferred larger groups to increase interaction, while others preferred smaller, focused groups. Staff commented that even very small groups were preferable to one-to-one appointments as they helped facilitate the interaction and sharing of knowledge.

What claimants gained from the workshops depended on the age and occupational background of other participants. Some claimants indicated that they would like to have been in groups with people in similar sectors, or with similar levels of experience or age. Participants believed that this could make self-disclosure more comfortable.

However, staff noted that having workshops where all claimants were young could cause problems in encouraging participation, as they were typically more difficult to engage. Further, staff thought this could risk the loss of greater mutual learning arising from mixed age groups, and despite some claimants' initial apprehensions of disclosure to people of differing backgrounds, staff found that the informal workshop environment enabled them to contribute. The familiarity from having the same claimants in both workshops was seen to ease discussion in the second one, as expected by the theory of change.

Workshop Environment

As intended by the theory of change, the rooms in which workshops were held were purposively designed in order to create a positive, interactive learning environment. They included visual aids for the topics discussed during the workshops, and facts and statistics about the labour market.

Staff considered the workshop environment to contribute to their success, with the physical layout of the room seen to be conducive to discussion. For example some staff reported that having workshop participants sat around one table encouraged a sense of equality. They also acknowledged a psychological effect of moving away from the desk, removing the barrier between the claimants and Work Coaches.

Claimant research indicated that relatively informal room layouts fostered an atmosphere of being among equals, contributing to the social goals of the theory of change (such as bonding, and social norms to foster a learning environment).

One further assumption about the environment concerned the availability of networking space to allow for continued discussion after the workshops. While staff remarked that claimants would sometimes continue sharing knowledge after workshops, claimants indicated that they were not made aware of break-out spaces in any of the Jobcentre Plus sites that would have allowed them to continue their discussions. Some claimants commented that they went to local cafes instead.

Workshop Reactions

Generally the staff interviewed had a positive perception of the workshops, though some suggestions for improvements were made. A number of staff felt that workshops helped claimants by providing a comprehensive start to their search for work. Staff thought that most if not all claimants learnt something regardless of their prior knowledge or experience.

4.3.4 Work at home activities

Claimants were required to undertake a specified set of work-related activities at home. These were checked by Work Coaches during short, follow-up appointments. IAP Work Coaches would provide this advice and feedback so that claimants could improve the job search skills practiced through these activities further. The theory of change anticipated that the activities to be completed at home would not be needed in full by all claimants, but that all would be able to benefit from them. This largely held true.

Some staff reported that the activity sheets helped them to identify the support each claimant needed to progress. The completion of activity sheets was reported to vary between claimants; while some were able to complete their activities well, others found them difficult or did not do them.

Claimants expressed mixed views on these activities. Some commented that the activities had helped them to practice a wider range of job search skills than they would have done otherwise. However, several claimants did not perceive some of the activities as being particularly useful to them, such as the travel to work task if they had their own means of transport. Some claimants felt that tasks were hard to complete in full within the timeframe given.

Claimants' experiences of undertaking the activities at home following each IAP workshop also varied, with expectations on completion of tasks reported to vary between Work Coaches. This seems to have been reflected in the staff research,

with some Work Coaches reporting completing the worksheets with claimants where they were having difficulties.

Staff commented that having flexibility in how much work to assign, and which work to give to particular claimants would be a useful improvement, to account for claimants' skills.

4.3.5 Follow-up meetings

A number of claimants highlighted the useful, practical advice that they received as part of these meetings, such as feedback on cover letters. Beyond this some claimants also reported receiving support and encouragement from their Work Coach based on the work they had completed. Claimants who received such support reported developing good personal rapport with their Work Coach as a result, and felt more motivated and positive about their job search.

Where claimants expressed negative comments about the follow-up meetings, this appeared to be linked to their reports of not receiving detailed feedback on their work. Some claimants explained that Work Coaches simply checked that the claimant had completed the work but did not provide feedback on quality. Staff research indicated that regular support was in some cases not provided until after the workshops, and that this was sometimes provided by non-IAP Work Coaches, who IAP Work Coaches felt were less able to provide sufficient feedback.

Interviews with Work Coaches found that in some cases progress was not properly checked until after workshop two, either because follow-ups by phone had not allowed staff to verify satisfactory completion of tasks, or because follow-up appointments had been delayed or missed. This was recognised as reducing the intensity of the programme.

Some claimants reported that a lack of feedback or continued support in some areas hampered them in refining their job search skills and persisting in their search for work. Both staff and claimants reported that follow-up meetings, when done well, were an effective and important way of maintaining momentum and engagement with job seeking. Claimants noted the role of follow-up meetings in providing feedback, support and encouragement, and staff noted that these meetings had helped them to identify and act upon individual support needs.

4.4 Outcomes

This section provides a summary of the evidence on intermediate outcomes and impacts of IAP for claimants, as well as staff attitudes and reflections on the IAP as a whole.

4.4.1 Claimant attitudinal change

Overall, staff and claimant research noted a positive change in the confidence and enthusiasm of claimants between their IWSI and having completed one or more of the IAP activities. Staff especially cited the workshops' collaborative and mutually supportive atmosphere as a key reason for this success. However, some claimants reported that repeated rejection and dissatisfaction at having to apply for 'undesirable' work dented their motivation.

Younger claimants, though describing a lack of confidence in job search skills at the outset, tended to be more motivated and open to learning from IAP activities, and showed greater confidence in the application of new techniques. Staff believed that IAP had particularly helped to motivate younger claimants.

IAP also appeared to increase the confidence and sense of autonomy of those interviewed aged 25-44, although some claimants attributed attitudinal effects more due to their own efforts than IAP. These claimants did not exhibit as great an increase in confidence as younger claimants, and they appeared to derive this largely from their employment history.

Those interviewed who were 45+, although also motivated to find work, tended to voice greater apprehension towards claiming benefits. Although IAP appeared to help motivate these claimants, a number noted it was becoming harder to maintain the same level of activity, positivity and confidence in the face of rejection, poorer IT literacy or ageism in the labour market.

Claimant interviews indicated that IAP had improved perceptions of Jobcentre Plus among both new and repeat claimants, creating an impression of greater empathy and professionalism from Work Coaches in supporting claimants to find work. Despite these positive changes to perceptions as a result of IAP, cultural stigmas around claiming still appeared to affect views of attending Jobcentre Plus.

4.4.2 Claimant behavioural change

In line with the theory of change, claimants reported that they had picked up a number of practical tips to refine their job search from IAP. Claimant interviews identified differences between age groups in the nature and degree of self-efficacy gains, although the BAU group also showed improvements.

Skills

On entering IAP, younger claimants largely believed they had the right foundational skills to look for work in place, and were particularly confident in their ability to use the internet to look for work. Gaps identified by younger claimants included making career decisions and drawing upon their social or professional networks to find work. After involvement in IAP, many described how they strongly believed that their applications and cover letters had greatly improved and that their job search approaches had become more focused.

Those interviewed aged 25-44 tended to be more confident in their job search ability at the outset, but IAP still appeared to benefit them in a wide range of areas, including interview techniques and collecting references, which they attributed to their Work Coaches and the workshops.

Older claimants appeared to be more mixed in their self-efficacy upon entering IAP, and reported increases in self-efficacy after IAP that were comparatively smaller than that of younger claimants after IAP.

Job search and job-readiness

Claimants did draw a link between identified improvements across skills, experiences and attitudes, and the effect on their wider strategy of job search and job-readiness. Views varied between directly attributing their improvement to IAP, and those who were more muted, though who nevertheless appreciated that IAP offered 'something for everyone', as the theory of change expected. Some also felt they were undertaking more activity to find work. Those interviewed aged 45+ were less likely than younger claimants to attribute improvements to IAP.

Claimants receiving BAU were notably more negative than the IAP group on whether Jobcentre Plus had contributed to job search or job-readiness. BAU claimants overwhelmingly stated they were no more job-ready, and that the activities they had undertaken as part of Jobcentre Plus support had made no difference to their capacity to look for work.

IAP claimants highlighted improvements in relation to CVs, cover letters, computer literacy, job search strategies and speculative applications although some claimants believed that they would have made these improvements themselves. Claimants who already understood their industry and were interested in industry specialisms, or who simply felt competent in the more basic job search techniques, were more likely to feel IAP to be time that they could have better used to look for work.

Many IAP claimants perceived an improvement in the overall quality or breadth of their job search, expanding the range of options at their disposal, although some claimants felt that they were expected to apply for jobs that were too divergent in content, or irrelevant to their personal circumstances. Some claimants also noted their dissatisfaction with the lack of tailoring across IAP provision, explaining that the 'one size fits all' approach was inappropriate.

4.4.3 Benefit and Employment Outcomes

The qualitative research with both claimants and staff provided strong indications that IAP helped move claimants closer to the labour market, through improvements to a range of intermediate outcomes, which included: confidence, self-efficacy, attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviours towards job seeking. Claimants drew a link between these improvements and the effect on their wider strategy of job-search and job readiness. The quantitative impact assessment complements this, and provides evidence that these intermediate outcomes for IAP claimants resulted in positive labour market outcomes.

Benefit receipt impacts

Figure 4.1 below shows the difference in proportion of intervention and control group participants⁶ that are on DWP benefits (excluding Universal Credit)⁷.

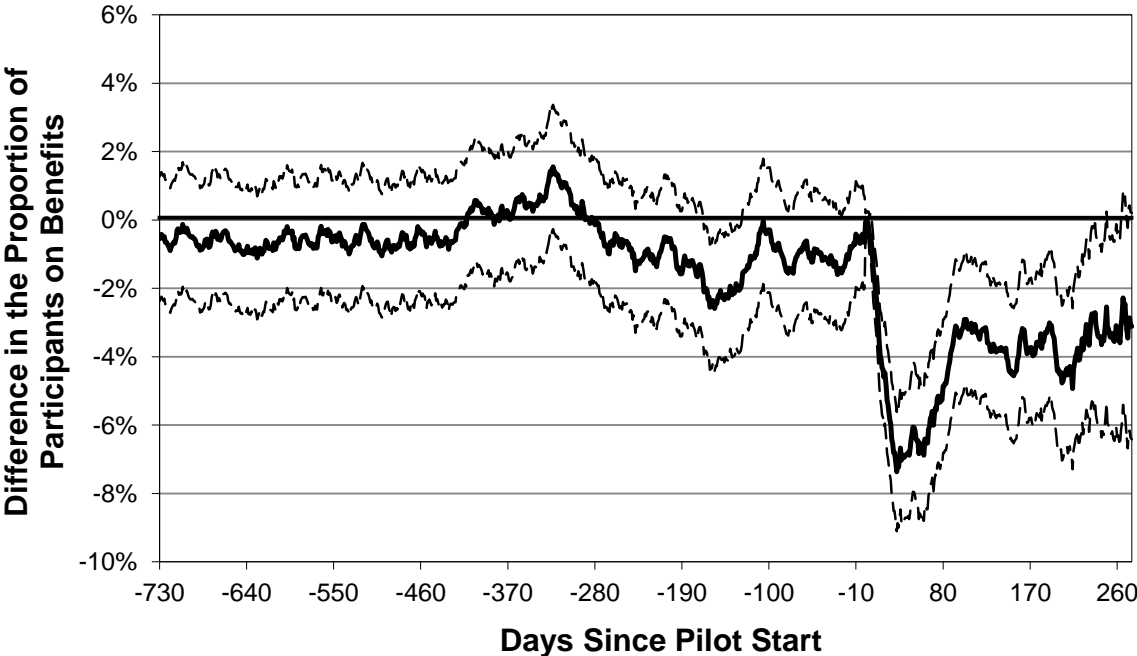
The margins of error represent the range of values that we can be 95% sure that the wider population's impact would lie between, if the trial population were a random sample of the wider population. When that range of values does not include zero we have good evidence that at least some of the measured difference in benefit receipt is due to IAP.

Where the difference in figure 4.1 is negative fewer people in the IAP group are on benefits compared to the BAU group. The difference is 0% at the pilot start date because all claimants from both groups are on benefit on the first day of their claim. The difference then steadily climbs over time to reach a point in the 5th week where almost 7 percentage points more claimants are off benefit in the treatment group compared to the control group (the confidence interval shows that there is a 95% certainty that the effect at this point is between around 5% and 8.5%). This provides evidence that IAP did accelerate movement off benefit as the theory of change intended. The magnitude of the effect remains reasonably persistent for a short time but decreases to a lower, but still statistically significant level of around 3 to 4 percentage points from around 12 weeks onwards. This indicates that IAP has a longer term effect.

⁶ For an overview of participants allocated to the study and their characteristics, as well as detail on the methodology that underpins this analysis, please see chapter 6.

⁷ Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Income Support, Carer's Allowance and Bereavement Benefits.

Figure 4.1 Difference in the proportion of intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) group participants that are on DWP benefits

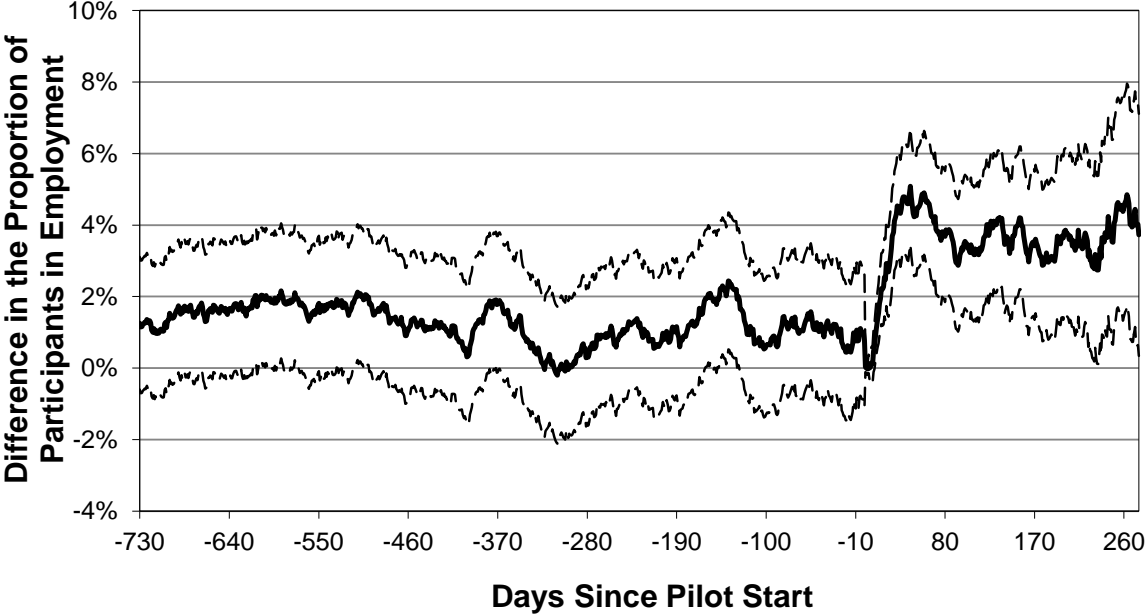


Note: The solid line shows the central estimate of the difference. The dashed lines show the upper and lower 95% confidence intervals. Where the difference in figure 4.1 is negative fewer people in the IAP group are on benefits compared to the BAU group.

Employment impacts

Figure 4.2 shows the difference in employment rates that we measure between the intervention group and the control group. It shows a marked and sustained increase in employment rates for the IAP group shortly after the point of claim, which reaches a peak after 5 weeks. This provides evidence that IAP did accelerate movement into work as the theory of change intended. The increase generally lies between 3 and 4 percentage points, which is lower than the difference in benefit receipt, but this is to be expected.

Figure 4.2 Difference in the proportion of intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) group participants that are in employment



Note: The solid line shows the central estimate of the difference. The dashed lines show the upper and lower 95% confidence intervals. Where the difference in figure 4.2 is positive more people in the IAP group are in employment compared to the BAU group.

Cumulative Impacts

Figure 4.1 and 4.2 illustrate the effect that IAP has at particular points in time. Cumulative impacts, better describe the totality of the impact for the first nine months after the point of claim. After 9 months, the cumulative impact upon benefits amounts to -11 days. The confidence interval for this measure is -5.5 to -17 days. The minus sign indicates that IAP participants are less likely to be on DWP primary benefits than then control group. The equivalent employment impact is 9.7 days with a confidence interval of 4.2 to 15 days. These are positive numbers because IAP participants are more likely to be in employment than the control group.

Subgroup Impacts

Central estimates of impacts for different types of IAP participant do differ but these differences are not significant. The differences observed can be attributed to random variation as well different levels of effectiveness of the programme. Whilst we observed slightly larger impacts for females compared with males, larger impacts for younger and older participants compared with those aged 25 to 49, and smaller

impacts for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) participants compared with white people, we cannot generalise from any differences that we observe because they are not significant.

4.4.4 Staff and claimant reflections on IAP

In general, staff and claimants were positive about IAP. Most claimants welcomed the intensive support at the beginning of their claim, and believed that they had learned new or refreshed existing job-search skills. Staff expressed support for national roll-out, with a range of views as to whether it should be for all claimants or more targeted, as well as constructive suggestions for improvement.

Some felt that IAP should be targeted to claimants who lack knowledge or experience of job seeking. Claimant interviews did indicate that what claimants gained was dependent on their prior level of knowledge of job seeking, though many derived something useful. However, some staff suggested that it could be difficult to identify claimants' key needs within the time-frame of the IWSI, or at this early stage in a claim.

In line with the theory of change the new emphasis of facilitating autonomous engagement in job seeking was welcomed by both staff and claimants. Staff involved in the workshops perceived a shift in their role to one more focused on facilitating claimants to complete activities autonomously, and sharing their knowledge and experience with each other.

Some staff noted that the added value of IAP over BAU lay in the support being more structured and more prescriptive, and that IAP ensured claimants' job search skills were assessed and developed earlier in their claim. Other staff noted that IAP provided a more comprehensive review of claimant job search skills.

The intensive delivery schedule of claimants completing activities within the expected period following starting a claim was not always being achieved, however, and was viewed by some staff as unrealistic. Some claimants did feel that they might have benefitted from more preparation and reflection time following the IAP workshops and activities to better direct their own personal job-search, though others noted that the limited time allowed them to access support quickly.

For some IAP claimants with previous experience of claiming, perceptions of Jobcentre Plus staff attitudes and capabilities had improved. Some of these claimants cited improvements in empathy towards their situations, information made available by staff and an appreciation of the workshops. These improvements appeared to be linked to the IAP coaching style and workshops.

Staff reported increases in job satisfaction, referencing a range of factors including getting positive feedback from customers, taking on a new challenge, having regular contact with claimants and getting the opportunity to implement an approach they had wanted for some time. These positive effects were attributed to the development of relationships and rapport both between claimants and staff.

5 Jobcentre Plus Staff Research

This chapter explores the staff views and experiences of delivering the Intensive Activity Programme, as explored through qualitative research conducted by the Department for Work and Pensions.

5.1 Key findings

- Work Coaches were largely content with their training; though some wanted either more or less focus on particular elements.
- Work Coaches reported successfully using a range of selling points to encourage claimants to voluntarily engage in the Intensive Activity Programme (IAP). However, they saw value in being able to mandate claimants to workshops as a last resort.
- Staff believed the IAP curriculum provided support that was comprehensive, and that its delivery at the beginning of claim was timely for many claimants.
- Staff felt the interactive nature of the workshops and the exchange of experience and job search tips resulted in a range of benefits for claimants.
- The Getting Started Handbook received mixed views from staff, and was not always used as intended by staff and claimants. While some felt that it provided a comprehensive foundation job seeking to claimants, others felt it was impractical.
- Staff reported that IAP had resulted in positive outcomes for many claimants, describing a range of drivers for these, though noted there were some exceptions.

5.2 Methodology

Fieldwork

In-depth face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with four Work Service Managers and 13 Work Coaches involved in delivering IAP, across four Jobcentre Plus offices in early September 2015.

The selection of IAP Jobcentre Plus offices from which Work Coaches were sampled for interviews was purposive. In order for staff interviewed to be able to comment on experiences of delivering IAP across the range of IAP trial sites, the four offices from which staff were invited to interview were selected to reflect diversity between the sites, considering variation in terms of geographical location, rural and urban locations, local labour market conditions, and IAP claimant caseload.

To ensure that Work Coaches interviewed would be able to answer questions on all aspects of delivering IAP (conducting Initial Work Search Interviews (IWSIs), facilitating workshops, conducting follow-up interviews) and that selection of staff from those delivering IAP was not biased (for example, by Jobcentre Plus sites volunteering higher-performing staff), sites first provided a list of all staff involved and their job-roles in IAP, and staff were selected at random from each group of staff performing these job-roles.

Topic guides used for interviews are available in appendix 7.1 and 7.2.

Interview Analysis

The qualitative interviews were recorded (with permission) using encrypted dictaphones and notes were produced on this basis. Thematic framework analysis was used to analyse the interview notes. Frameworks were coded to allow systematic retrieval of information falling under key headings. This enabled detailed analysis and interpretation of the data (see appendix 7.3).

5.2.1 Key research aims

The key research aims for staff interviews were to explore staff perceptions of:

- The intensity of IAP for claimants
- The suitability of IAP for different groups of claimants
- Work Coach ability to 'sell' IAP as expected by the theory of change
- The IAP curriculum and products
- Claimant outcomes
- The transition to a facilitative approach to coaching

5.2.2 Staff research limitations

All IAP offices began delivering IAP on the same date in March 2015. Staff interviews were conducted over two weeks in September 2015. This did not provide an opportunity to directly assess the influence of time spent delivering IAP on staff views of the programme. Staff interviewed had approximately five months experience of delivering IAP, and offer opinions based on this experience as well as their previous experience delivering business as usual (BAU) support.

5.3 Preparation and introducing claimants to the IAP

This section outlines Work Coach views on the two-day training they received, and the IWSI. In this interview, the theory of change expected that Work Coaches would introduce claimants to IAP and attempt to encourage autonomous engagement through ‘selling’ the merits of IAP.

5.3.1 Work Coach training for IAP

The training aimed to give staff an understanding of the IAP process, to introduce them to workshop facilitation skills and to shift the emphasis of coaching away from telling claimants what to do (transmission) to enabling autonomous engagement and ownership of job seeking (facilitation).

While Work Coaches were largely content with the IAP training overall, some specific areas for improvement were identified. Some Work Coaches were happy with the balance the training struck between content delivered on workshop facilitation methods and day-to-day administrative processes, while others wanted either more or less focus on either aspect.

Work Coaches who had previous experience or training in group-work tended to feel more comfortable with the concepts covered than those who had not. Some would have preferred receiving the training sooner before the trial began in order to consolidate their learning. Scripts for IAP workshops were not provided during the training (as they sometimes are for other group-work programmes). While some staff would have liked scripts to be provided, others appreciated the opportunity to devise their own.

5.3.2 Other support

Some staff reported receiving extra support in delivering IAP. Staff noted that this sometimes took the form of observing an IWSI or workshop and providing feedback. There were benefits cited from a visit from the Compliance and Support team in terms of providing reassurance that staff were delivering as expected; and the opportunity for improvements to be identified. Support from Jobcentre Plus managers was also viewed positively in terms of dealing with queries or escalating issues.

5.3.3 The Initial Work Search Interview

The theory of change expected that during the IWSI Work Coaches would attempt to persuade claimants of the value of participation in IAP, and generate engagement without relying on conditionality to motivate their attendance. Staff described a variation in reactions across claimants during the IWSI and to being introduced to IAP.

Staff reported using selling points in attempt to encourage and motivate claimants to take part in IAP. Some of these included:

- Explaining that the curriculum would help them to develop valuable skills and knowledge
- Drawing on positive feedback received from previous participants
- Emphasising the interactivity of the workshops. Some Work Coaches explained that with more experienced claimants they highlighted that they would be able to share their experience and knowledge with other claimants, and that they would be an important part of the workshop's delivery.

Some staff reported difficulty in convincing some claimants that IAP would be useful or helpful to them. In particular cases staff believed that this was due to repeat claimants' previous experience with Jobcentre Plus.

Mandating attendance

Staff reported that there were some instances of claimants failing to attend (FTA) workshops. Staff descriptions of how frequent FTAs were ranged from rare, to there being enough absences in one workshop for it to be cancelled. Explanations offered for non-attendance ranged from claimants losing their appointment papers, to attending a job interview or being ill.

Mandating claimants to participate using a Jobseeker's Direction was described by staff in the context of being a last resort if a claimant failed to attend a workshop without valid reason. While some Work Coaches saw value in the option of using the Jobseeker's Direction, overall, staff felt most claimants did attend IAP voluntarily.

5.4 The IAP support package

This section explores Work Coaches' and Work Service Managers' views on the package of support offered as part of IAP. The IAP curriculum was formed of 12 modules, which were delivered through two workshops as well as activities to be completed by the claimant at home.⁸

5.4.1 Staff views on IAP module content

Some staff perceived the broad range of modules covered in the workshops to be valuable, noting that while these topics would be covered on an ad hoc basis as part of BAU, IAP provided comprehensive and structured support to the beginning of a claim. Staff varied on which modules they viewed as most useful.

The My CV, My Interview Skills, My Covering Letters and My Application Forms modules were cited as particularly important modules within the curriculum because they were viewed as providing the basic skills that should be established as soon as possible in the course of a job search. Staff also commented that these modules received positive claimant feedback.

With regard to the My Travel to Work module, some Work Coaches believed it was useful because some claimants had not previously considered whether they were looking for work within a suitable travel distance far enough away from their home. However, staff in some Jobcentre Plus sites felt that the module wasn't relevant to their local area, for example because claimants already commuted to the Jobcentre Plus and had considered travelling to another town for work.

In line with the theory of change staff reported that they believed most claimants gained something from IAP. Some staff also noted that the value of particular modules could depend on claimants' existing skills and experience. For example information technology (IT) and internet job search skills were seen to impact on the value of the My Internet Work Search module. When staff perceived claimants as already adept with the learning objectives of a module, some staff felt the content was less valuable for them. Because of this, some staff called for greater flexibility to target modules at those customers that needed specific help with a particular area, although it was also noted that the needs of claimants were not always easily identifiable early on.

5.4.2 The Getting Started Handbook

Staff explained that the Getting Started Handbook was distributed to claimants by email or as hard-copy in the IWSI, and that emails were followed up by phone calls to provide an explanation to claimants on the aims of the Handbook. If sent by email,

⁸ See section 1.1.1 for an overview of the curriculum.

some staff explained that technical difficulties had been reported in particular instances by claimants due to its PDF format.

Work Coaches reported asking IAP claimants to complete as much of the Handbook as they could before attending their next interview or workshop, but not expecting it all to be completed by that point. Claimants were provided with assistance from their Work Coaches to complete the Handbook.

The Getting Started Handbook in many cases was not used as intended. Some claimants did not complete them, and some Work Coaches did not refer back to the Getting Started Handbook in follow-up appointments but focused instead on the other work at home activities as the main way to progress the claimant through the curriculum.

Staff views on the content and aims of the Getting Started Handbook were mixed. Some staff felt the Handbook provided a comprehensive foundation to help claimants build their job search skills and helped to identify gaps in those skills. As such, some staff felt that the Getting Started Handbook would be best targeted at those claimants who were new to unemployment. The Handbook was also noted to be a useful tool to find out about claimants prior to appointments.

However, some Work Coaches believed the Getting Started Handbook put a focus on ticking off specified tasks, which could undermine IAP's aim of working with people to assess what they were able to do. Other limitations voiced were that the Handbook was too long and that there was too little time to discuss it at the IWSI, or that the Handbook duplicated the material covered in the workshops. Staff believed these were some of the reasons driving the low numbers completed and returned.

5.4.3 Workshops

In workshops, the theory of change expected that facilitators would explore claimants' understanding of their responsibilities and tailor the workshop content from the curriculum to their views and experiences to create an interactive, personalised and engaging experience. Staff felt the workshops were a key driver of the success of IAP, believing that claimants derived many benefits from these.

Some Work Coaches recognised the interactivity and the collaborative atmosphere in the IAP workshops as key contributors to its success. This interactivity was compared favourably to other group information sessions offered as part of BAU.

Staff reported that workshops were typically attended by mixed groups of claimants with a range of characteristics in terms of interview experience, computer skills, employment history, as well as how outgoing they were. Examples were given of claimants sharing knowledge, for example job search tips and vacancy details, both inside and (though more limited) outside the workshops. Some staff reported that claimants would open up more than they would at a one-to-one interview.

Staff perceptions of the workshops overall ranged from very positive with no suggested improvements to positive with recognition of limitations for particular claimants. A number of staff felt that the workshops helped claimants by giving

comprehensive coverage of everything they needed to think about and start to look for work. Staff also noted that the workshops allowed staff to deliver a consistent message about benefit rules and regulations to a number of claimants at the same time, and that the workshops helped improved awareness of the support Jobcentre Plus offers. Several Work Coaches said they would like to continue delivering the workshops after the trial.

The workshop environment

The theory of change expected that the physical environment in which the workshops were run would influence their success. Staff research supported this assumption, and some staff commented that the physical layout of the furniture was conducive to discussion, for example, by having rooms with noticeboards and posters as prompts for particular topics of the curriculum, and that ensuring everyone in a workshop sat around one table to encourage a sense of equality. One staff view was that simply moving away from desks had diminished a psychological barrier between claimants and Work Coaches.

Workshop facilitation methods

Competent facilitation methods seen by staff as key to workshop success included encouraging participants to share their experiences and ideas. A range of staff said that the best facilitators were those that were able to encourage claimant involvement. The benefit of previous experience in running group-sessions was a noted advantage which allowed some Work Coaches greater comfort with the IAP approach of encouraging claimant interaction and enabled them to transfer techniques they knew, such as previously used ice-breakers. These Work Coaches also appeared to be more positive about workshops than those who had less group-work experience.

Work Coaches described efforts to interact and engage with claimants in order to encourage conversation. Examples included:

- Getting to know claimants' backgrounds in order to be able to relate to them
- Using icebreaker activities and jokes
- Gently encouraging quieter claimants to participate in discussions
- Using visual aids to explain module content
- Showing empathy with difficulties claimants had in finding work

Work Coaches also spoke about ways to minimise negative interaction by claimants, for example by discouraging claimants from dominating a session, or by placing disruptive individuals in separate workshops.

Workshop duration and content

Both workshops were intended to last 1.5 hours. Staff considered workshop one to be more content heavy than workshop two. Some staff felt that this made it difficult

to maintain claimant concentration throughout. Another view was that it did not allow enough time for discussion after each topic.

Nevertheless, staff felt that the first workshop was received better than the second, reporting more positive claimant feedback, that it was more about getting claimants actively involved and sharing information, and that claimants appeared to get more out of it. Some Work Coaches also reported the first workshop as being easier to facilitate.

Some Work Coaches reported they made minor changes to the basic script by adding icebreakers and quizzes. A number of staff expressed the opinion that they would like to have had more control over the content of the workshops, to tailor and adapt them according to what was relevant to their local labour market, and by using feedback from claimants. However, other staff felt that it was difficult to tell in the IWSI whether the workshops would be useful for a claimant, or which modules they might find most helpful.

Staff reported that the workshop delivery of the My CVs module was especially well-received, and that the My CVs, My Covering Letters and My References modules sat well together in workshop one. While the My Speculative Applications module covered in workshop two was considered useful by Work Coaches, some staff felt that Jobcentre Plus offices should have the option to change where it sat in the module order if it wasn't relevant to their local labour market, or that the module information should simply be provided outside of the workshop. Some Work Coaches felt that the My Travel to Work module would also be better delivered in one-to-one appointments than in a workshop.

5.4.4 Workshop group composition and dynamics

Work Coaches described how claimants' reactions to the workshops varied. Some staff reported that claimants who were new to job seeking readily absorbed the new information and that it was easy to spend much longer working with these claimants. However, some Work Coaches felt that particular claimants would benefit from one-to-one support prior to attending a workshop, for example, those claimants who did not have a CV ready for the first workshop or for those who faced certain barriers to work.

Work Coaches were asked to describe ways in which claimants interacted with each other and how this contributed to the success of the workshop. Positive examples included claimants explaining job search skills, or signposting each other to vacancies. Some staff noted that information could have more credibility because it had come from a claimant, and that this also increased the credibility of the job seeking methods described by the facilitator. For example, former employers with experience of recruitment were able to provide feedback to other claimants. This was thought to be more powerful than had it come from a Work Coach.

Some staff reported that even claimants who do not like talking in groups felt able to engage due to workshops fostering a comfortable environment. The familiarity from

having the same claimants in workshop one and workshop two was seen by staff to help claimants to speak more freely in workshop two, which lends some support to the expectation of the theory of change that bonds would form between claimants.

Some staff noted that workshop interactivity also depended on how outgoing claimants were. Work Coaches explained that the varied mix of claimant backgrounds and work experience enabled them to call on more experienced claimants to share their knowledge with younger claimants, which helped create an open and collaborative atmosphere.

Work Coaches believed that the least successful workshops were those in which claimants expected Work Coaches to tell them what to do, or where the majority of claimants were reluctant or negative about taking part. One view was that groups with a more dominant participant could be more passive because claimants tended to allow the confident participant to answer the questions. Some Work Coaches considered the hardest claimants to engage to be younger claimants (which made some staff appreciate the mix of ages in workshops), or those who had previously been on Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). Staff reported that some claimants could be disruptive, which both made the facilitator's job harder, and detracted from the value of the workshop for the other claimants.

Group size

Staff noted that the success of the workshops also depended on how many claimants attended. Maximum group sizes reportedly ranged from between 8 and 12 participants. Staff preferences on group size varied: some staff preferred having eight or more claimants in a workshop in order to enable more interaction, while others preferred smaller groups of about five or six claimants because they felt it was then easier to focus the workshop.

Some staff noted that even very small groups were a preferable method of support than one-to-one appointments, because of the opportunity to facilitate interaction and the sharing of knowledge.

5.4.5 Staff-reported claimant feedback on Workshops

Work Coaches described claimant responses to the workshops as mostly positive, and that some claimants who initially had a negative view of the workshops had changed to a positive view by the time the workshops had been completed. Reasons staff suggested for the positive claimant feedback included:

- That workshops respected claimants' knowledge of job seeking
- That workshops were stimulating, provided a collaborative atmosphere, and enabled claimants to share experiences with and support one another
- That positive employment outcomes resulted from skills developed through the modules

5.4.6 Work at home activities

In the time between and after workshops, Work Coaches reported asking claimants to complete a number of activities. These activities were to be reviewed at follow-up appointments between workshop one and two, so that support could be offered based on the claimant's progress. Some of these included:

- Identifying who they would use as references
- Showing their CV to three people to get feedback
- Registering and job seeking on five job search websites
- Doing a practice job application using a competency based approach
- Researching interview questions and plan answers

Positive views of the activities included that they helped Jobcentre Plus staff identify how much support each claimant needed. However, some staff recognised that while some claimants were able to complete the activities well with limited or no assistance, others found it difficult or did not do it. Work Coaches reported providing support to claimants who experienced difficulties.

Among reasons given by staff as to why claimants may not have completed activities included that the length of the workshops meant that claimants might have switched off or forgotten what information was presented during the session, and that staff found it difficult to ask claimants who had been in senior positions to do this work. Some staff believed that some of the negative feedback received from claimants was sometimes explained by claimants viewing the activities much like homework, or that they duplicated other materials already provided by Jobcentre Plus.

5.4.7 Follow-up meetings

The following findings on follow-up meetings are reported in general terms, and could refer to meetings held either in-between workshops, or after both workshops until the end of a claim.

Some staff felt that follow-up meetings could be an effective means of providing tailored support to claimants and maintaining the momentum of IAP, but that some meetings were not as effective as they could have been. Some staff felt that unrealistic deadlines for the work at home activities and the inability to verify this work over the phone were the cause of delays to follow-ups and checking claimant progress which limited the intensity of the programme.

Staff reported that most meetings immediately following workshops were conducted by telephone, though some were face-to-face. They described using these meetings to spend time understanding claimants' progress after each workshop, and to provide support over particular issues that claimants had raised. In other cases, Work Coaches did not provide regular support until after the workshops.

Some staff noted that follow-up appointments provided an effective way of maintaining momentum, identifying individual support needs and ensuring that

claimants received timely support with barriers to work. One example of staff using follow-ups to tailor support was booking claimants in to use Jobcentre Plus computers if required.

Staff stated that face-to-face appointments had allowed facilitators to see proof of completed activities which could not be verified by telephone, reporting that they believed some claimants were not always truthful about what they had completed over the phone.

The risk of doing too much for claimants in these follow-up meetings was also raised as an issue, where some staff reported completing the activities on behalf of the claimants, rather than supporting them in such a way to complete it themselves. This was seen as more likely to occur when claimants' contributed less effort or felt overwhelmed by the number of activities that need completing.

Contrary to policy intent, it was noted that in some cases Work Coaches who had not received the IAP training conducted follow-up meetings with claimants. Some IAP Work Coaches interviewed saw this as potentially demotivating for claimants and felt that non-IAP Work Coaches had a poorer understanding of the activities, and may not have had enough time to give sufficient feedback.

5.5 Perceived outcomes and conclusions on the IAP

This section provides a summary of staff attitudes and reflections on the IAP as a whole, including the key outcomes that staff perceived IAP to result in and what staff believed to drive these.

5.5.1 Staff reflections on IAP as a whole

In general Work Coaches were positive about IAP. Some expressed enthusiasm and support for national roll-out of the policy, as well as regret that the IAP approach had not been adopted earlier. Some Work Coaches said they would continue with the IAP coaching style after the trial because of the benefits they had witnessed of this way of working.

Some Work Coaches felt that IAP provided a more intensive and comprehensive review of claimants' job search skills. However, it was also felt by some that the intensive delivery schedule of claimants completing all IAP activities within 21 days of starting a claim was not always being achieved, and that the deadline was considered unrealistic for some claimants. Some Work Coaches also believed that some claimants would benefit from one-to-one support targeted at particular skills-gaps prior to attending the workshops. Others called for greater flexibility in targeting the curriculum for certain claimants (see outcomes for particular claimants and targeted support in 5.6.2).

Work Coaches noted that support similar to that provided in the IAP curriculum (for example, help with job applications and CVs) would have been provided on an ad hoc basis as part of BAU. However, they felt that these important aspects of support were now more structured and prescriptive as part of IAP, and that claimants' job search skills were assessed and developed earlier in their claim.

Staff referred to positive feedback they had received from claimants, and some staff were keen to highlight their perception of an improvement in claimant attitudes to IAP between starting and after they had taken part in IAP.

Although some Work Coaches suggested that they would like to make the workshops voluntary, they wanted to retain the ability to mandate attendance if they saw this to be appropriate.

5.5.2 Outcomes for claimants as perceived by staff

Key outcomes

Staff in general offered the perspective that IAP had positive outcomes in many cases, but added that there were some exceptions to these.

As well as a perception that IAP had increased skills and resulted in positive labour market outcomes, some staff noted positive attitudinal outcomes. These included that IAP had helped claimants to associate Jobcentre Plus with workshops and job search rather than benefits, and that claimants' attitudes and confidence towards job seeking and finding work had improved. One view was expressed that it reduced the risk of long-term unemployment.

Some staff felt that IAP would not be necessary to achieve desirable outcomes for all early claims, as they believed some would find work without the intensive support.

Outcomes for particular claimants and targeted support

While some staff held the view that most claimants gained something from IAP regardless of their background, some staff noted outcomes they believed to apply to certain types of claimants in particular. These included:

- That IAP was particularly beneficial for claimants who had moved from ESA to JSA by providing a good introduction to the labour market
- That IAP was beneficial for lone parents and post Work Programme claimants, because some of these claimants did not have CVs
- That IAP had provided a useful platform to motivate younger claimants, who staff described as requiring more motivation than older claimants

Claimants that some staff believed IAP was comparatively less suitable for included:

- Those facing multiple barriers, for example with housing or addiction problems
- Those with existing advanced job search skills, because they were seen as less likely to learn new skills

Some staff also reported difficulty in supporting claimants who were reluctant to adapt their job search strategies in line with the suggestions of Work Coaches, and those who perceived the claims process to be bureaucratic.

Staff views on which claimants should receive IAP varied. Some staff felt that IAP should be offered to all new claims; however for some staff this was because they felt it was too difficult to identify who they should refer to IAP. In contrast, others felt Work Coaches should be given discretion for referrals to IAP, that some claimants did not need the support offered by IAP and that IAP should be targeted to claimants who did. Other staff wanted to tailor workshop content to the needs of particular claimants.

Drivers of claimant outcomes as perceived by staff

One predominant view among Work Coaches was that the success of IAP was driven by its interactivity and the collaborative atmosphere formed in the workshops. Work Coaches welcomed that IAP began at the start of a claimant journey as they felt it enabled claimants to become effective and competitive job seekers at an early point in their claim. These views closely echoed the core intentions of the theory of change.

Other drivers of IAP outcomes noted by staff included:

- Work Coaches recognising the work claimants put into their job search
- Fostering rapport between claimants and Work Coaches earlier in a claim through workshops, more frequent contact and intensive engagement
- Reviewing claimants' CVs at the earliest point in their claim
- Helping customers who had recently become unemployed to update their methods of job search
- Refreshing skills and tackling behavioural barriers to employment sooner than might have been possible in BAU
- Supporting claimants to deliver what was expected of them by Jobcentre Plus, rather than assuming they are capable
- Maintaining a positive perception of Jobcentre Plus by providing support to claimants

5.5.3 Outcomes for staff

This section explores outcomes that Work Coaches reported experiencing in their own development and job satisfaction as a result of delivering IAP.

Work Coach development

As a consequence of being involved in IAP, Work Coaches reported improving their own knowledge, for example, of developments in the labour market and new job search websites. Some also noted that IAP helped Work Coaches focus on a wider range of job search skills during appointments and made them more open to new ideas of how Work Coaches can help up-skill claimants.

The theory of change anticipated a cultural change towards a more facilitative way that Work Coaches would support claimants. Supporting this assumption, some IAP Work Coaches involved in the workshops perceived a shift in their role to one more focused on facilitating claimants to complete activities autonomously, and sharing their knowledge and experience with each other. This was compared preferably to a style of working where Work Coaches could be more instructive in how they worked with claimants. Some Work Coaches felt that the IAP approach reflected the general change in approach to Work Coaching.

Job satisfaction

While some Work Coaches reported that workshops could sometimes be stressful to deliver, staff generally reported increases in overall job satisfaction. Reasons cited for increased job satisfaction included:

- Receiving positive feedback from claimants
- Taking on a new challenge
- Having regular and more frequent contact with claimants
- Implementing an approach they felt they had wanted to for some time

Work Service Managers reflected on the positive outcomes of the trial, noting that Work Coach positivity had increased as they perceived IAP to be working. The most positive staff appeared to be those Work Coaches who had previous experience running group sessions, or those currently facilitating the IAP workshops.

6 Impact Research

This chapter summarises analysis of the IAP's impact upon benefit and employment outcomes, as well as impacts for particular subgroups of Intensive Activity Programme participants. An overview of the data upon which the analysis is based is also given.

6.1 Key findings

- The impact assessment indicates a sustained positive effect of the Intensive Activity Programme (IAP).
- IAP claimants were approximately 7 (\pm 2) percentage points more likely to be off benefit by the 5th week of their claim.
- It is estimated that IAP claimants on average spent around 11 (\pm 6) more days off benefit than business as usual (BAU) claimants in the first 9 months since making their claim.
- A marked and sustained increase in employment rates of about 3 to 4 percentage points emerged for the IAP group four to five weeks after the beginning of their claim in comparison to BAU, suggesting that IAP accelerated entry to employment as the theory of change anticipated.
- Whilst the central estimates of the sub-group impacts do differ between sub-groups, the differences are not significant.

6.2 Methodology and data overview

Participant data was sourced from a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) case management system called the 'Labour Market System' (LMS). This data comprised 18,486 IAP participant records for a total of 14,508 individuals. Some of the records were created in error and some others related to claimants who were out of scope of the trial or exempted from the trial.

After removing the markers that were set in error, we found that 8.4% of the remaining individuals were out of scope. In 74% of these cases this was because the person was returning to or joining the Work Programme (WP) from day one of their Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claim. In the remaining 27% of cases this was because that person had English language requirements and therefore the trial intervention was not suitable.

This left 13,456 individuals represented in the data; 9.8% of these were exempted from the trial. In 59% of these cases, exemption was because that person was receiving post-WP support, 7.8% because they were receiving some other form of provision, 4.3% because of 'unacceptable customer behaviour' and the remaining 29% for 'other' reasons.

This left 12,143 individuals represented in the data; 5720 in the treatment (IAP) group and 6423 in the control (BAU) group. The random allocation was administered on the basis of the last digit of the National Insurance Number (on the assumption that this acts as a pseudo random number generator), with values of 5 and over leading to a person being allocated to the IAP group, and the remainder to the BAU group. In principle this should lead to IAP and BAU groups that differ in size only through random variation. However, the observed difference of 703 is larger than expected through random variation alone, so it is likely that the 'out of scope' or exemption criteria have been applied differently to the two groups. Nonetheless, this asymmetry does not appear to have introduced systematic differences in the characteristics of the treatment and control groups and therefore our estimates of the trial's impacts are likely to remain unbiased.

Another potential source of bias occurs when people are not put into the correct (IAP or BAU) group. 2.9% of the non-exempt people who should have been put into the IAP group were actually put into the BAU group and 0.5% of the people who should have been put into the control group were put into the treatment group. Overall, 1.7% were assigned to the wrong group. Misallocation is believed to be caused simply by human error or motivated by a belief that the trial intervention (in this case IAP) is either unsuitable for some of those who should be in the treatment group or beneficial for some of those who should be in the control group. Owing to the scope for these misallocations to introduce bias into our estimates of IAP's impact we treat people according to the group that they should have been put into and not the group that they were put into. This is a so-called 'Intention to Treat' approach and usually has the effect that we measure a lower impact than is truly the case. However, that impact is more likely to be an unbiased measure and therefore a preferable estimate of the effect size.

Our final comment on the trial participant data concerns the point in time from which we measure our benefit and employment impacts. LMS markers might be set at various points in a person's claim. However, in order to clearly distinguish a trial's impact it is better to align the participant data to some common reference point. The best reference point in this instance is the first day of the JSA claim that led to participation on IAP, given that IAP is an early intervention designed to shorten claim durations. However, to measure an impact from the start of a person's claim we clearly need to be able to identify that claim.

We have used DWP's benefits administrative data to track participants' presence on benefit but we could only find a JSA record that coincides with the LMS record for 10,091 out of the 12,143 non-exempt individuals. This is a shortfall of 17%.⁹ We do

⁹ This figure was 18% for the intervention group and 16% for the control group.

not know the reasons for this shortfall but for our estimate of the trial’s impacts to be reliable, we must limit our analysis to cases (and therefore data) that are fully compliant with the trial protocols. Coupled with the fact that we have used an ITT approach in our analysis, this means that we classify 4806 people as being in the IAP intervention group and 5285 in the control.

6.2.1 Participant characteristics

Before we present the trial impacts we overview various characteristics of the trial participants in order to confirm that there are no systematic differences between the treatment and control groups. Table 6.1 profiles the gender, age and ethnicity of the trial groups as well as their disability, known skills needs, partner and parental status and sought occupations. There are some moderate differences, for example, the control group have marginally more children and are slightly less likely to be seeking professional jobs. However, these differences are very small, are not unexpected given the number of indicators that we have checked and will not be a major cause of the differences in outcomes.

Table 6.1 Intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) group characteristics

Characteristic	IAP	BAU
Active Participants	4806	5285
Gender		
Male	64%	64%
Female	36%	36%
Ethnicity		
White	91%	91%
Black	1.8%	2.1%
Asian	2.6%	2.7%
Mixed	1.1%	1.2%
Chinese/Other	1.3%	1.3%
Prefer Not To Say	1.7%	1.8%
Unknown	0.2%	0.2%
Age At Start of Pilot		
16 to 24	33%	34%
25 to 29	14%	14%
30 to 39	20%	19%
40 to 49	17%	16%
50 to 59	13%	13%
60 or Over	3%	3%

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DDA¹⁰ Disabled	21%	21%
Skills Needs		
Basic Skills Need	8.2%	7.4%
English as a Second Language	0.5%	0.6%
Number of Children		
0 Children	85%	86%
1 Child	7%	6%
2 Children*	4.1%	5.1%
3 Children	2.2%	2.1%
4 or More Children	1.2%	1.2%
Age of Youngest Child		
0 to 2*	1.8%	2.4%
3 or 4	2.0%	1.6%
5 to 10	5.6%	6.2%
11 to 15	1.8%	1.9%
16 or Over	1.3%	1.0%
Unknown	1.8%	1.6%
In Receipt of Partner Allowance	8%	9%
Sought Occupations		
Has One Recorded	88%	89%
Managers and Senior Officials	37%	38%
Professional*	8%	6%
Associate Professional and Technical	3%	3%
Administrative and Secretarial	6%	6%
Skilled Trades	4%	4%
Personal Service	4%	4%
Sales and Customer Service	20%	21%
Process, Plant and Machine	6%	6%
Elementary	19%	20%

**Difference is statistically significant with 95% degree of confidence.*

Source: DWP benefits administrative data November 2015 and Labour Market System: February 2016

Trial participants' presence on benefits and in employment prior to joining the trial was also checked. Past presence on DWP benefits is a good predictor of future presence on benefits so data on benefit and employment history provides very good evidence on whether both groups were on a trajectory to have similar benefit outcomes in the absence of the IAP intervention. Figure 6.1 and 6.2 in the next

¹⁰ *As defined in the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995.*

section show the differences in benefit receipt and employment rates in the two years prior to trial participation. What differences we do measure can be explained by random variation introduced through the sampling process and in any event those differences are very much lower than the differences that we measure after the trial. Therefore, it is unlikely that the impacts we attribute to IAP were in fact due to pre-existing differences between the IAP and BAU groups.

6.3 Estimates of impacts

6.3.1 Benefit receipt

In this section we estimate the impact that IAP has had in participants' reliance upon DWP primary benefits¹¹ after taking part in the trial. However, we also check whether differences in benefit receipt after the trial may have been influenced by differences in benefit receipt before taking part in the trial. We note that at the time of running the trial a new benefit, Universal Credit (UC), was being rolled out. We have not included UC in our analysis because data for this benefit is not readily available and our measure of being 'on' or 'off' benefits does not apply to UC in the way that it does the pre-existing benefits. We cannot rule out the possibility that some participants made a claim to UC during the period of time covered by our analysis but we believe that the numbers who may have done so will be extremely small and their omission from our analysis will not significantly alter our conclusions.

That limitation accepting, figure 6.1 shows for both the intervention group and the control group the proportion of claimants that are on DWP primary benefits in the period of time before and after participating in IAP. Figure 6.2 shows the difference between these two curves. Where the difference is negative IAP has led to fewer people being on DWP primary benefits at that point in time with respect to their JSA claim start.

As mentioned in the previous section, figure 6.2 also shows the difference in presence on benefits during the two years prior to the claim start. Finally, also shown in figure 6.2 are the margins of error associated with the differences in benefit caseloads. The margins of error represent the range of values that we can be 95% sure that the wider population's impact would lie between, if the trial population were a random sample of the wider population. When that range of values does not include zero we have good evidence that at least some of the measured difference in benefit receipt is due to IAP and not due to random variation.

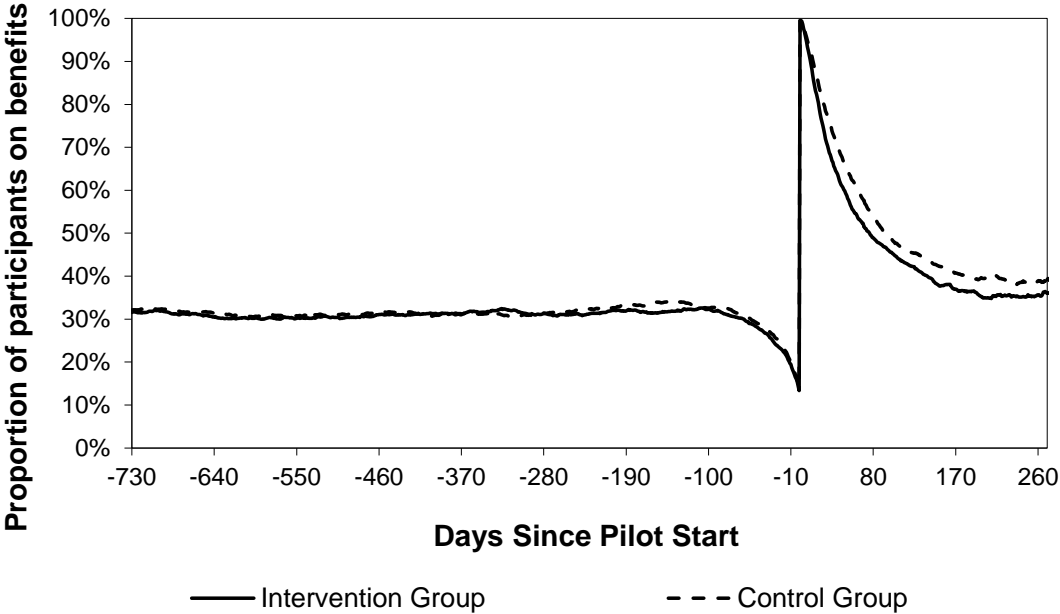
Figure 6.2 shows a clear difference in presence on benefits in the period following the start of the claim that led to trial participation, i.e. fewer IAP participants are on primary benefits than BAU participants. The difference is 0% at the first date because all claimants from both groups are on benefit on the first day of their claim.

¹¹ Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Income Support, Carer's Allowance and Bereavement Benefits.

The difference then steadily climbs over time to reach a point in the 5th week where almost 7 percentage points more claimants are off benefit in the treatment group compared to the control group (the confidence interval shows that there is a 95% certainty that the effect at this point is between around 5% and 8.5%). The magnitude of the effect remains reasonably persistent for a short time but decreases to a lower, but still statistically significant level of around 3 to 4 percentage points from around 12 weeks onwards. This indicates that IAP has a longer term effect.

We only show data for the first 9 months of the claim because beyond this point we have insufficient data to provide robust figures. This is because fewer claimants joined the trial sufficiently long ago to have outcomes to observe at longer time periods, so our longer term measures are based upon fewer people than our short term measures. As a result the sample size gets smaller and smaller for longer term outcomes and our confidence intervals get wider, to the point where we cannot be sure that the measured differences are due to the IAP intervention and not due to random variation.

Figure 6.1 Proportion of intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) group participants that are on DWP benefits



Note: Figure 6.1 shows that 14% of both the intervention and the control group were on DWP benefits immediately before the JSA claim that led to pilot participation. This is because those people transitioned from a different benefit (typically Employment and Support Allowance) to JSA. The decrease from a steady 30% to 14% of participants on benefits before the point of claim is due to the fact that many people have short term breaks in their claim due to, for example, temporary jobs.

Figure 6.2 Difference in the proportion of intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) group participants that are on DWP benefits



Note: The solid line shows the central estimate of the difference. The dashed lines show the upper and lower 95% confidence intervals. Where the difference in figure 6.2 is negative fewer people in the IAP group are on benefits compared to the BAU group.

6.3.2 Employment impacts

We also examined differences in employment rates as far as we can tell from our data. We used Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) P45 data to identify employment starts and ends. There are known shortcomings in this data. For example:

- Self-employed jobs are under-reported,
- Jobs that pay below the Lower Earnings Limit are likely to be under-reported,
- Many employment start and end dates are not known precisely,
- Many start and end dates are set to the beginning and end of the financial year respectively,
- Many jobs are not reported until a significant period of time after they began, so there can be long time lags before we know about some employment starts.

Further, where an employment spell overlaps with a benefit spell, we have discounted that period of employment even though this may be due to permitted work whilst claiming DWP benefits. Therefore, our estimated impacts upon employment are likely to be lower than the true impact. Accordingly, we provide those estimates

to corroborate the benefit impacts as opposed to a complete and accurate assessment of the additional likelihood of being in employment.

Figure 6.3 shows the employment rates that we measure for the intervention group and the control group in the period of time before and after pilot participation. Figure 6.4 shows the difference between these two curves. Figure 6.4 shows a marked and sustained increase in employment rates shortly after the point of claim, and reaching a peak after 5 weeks. The increase generally lies between 3 and 4 percentage points (whilst the margins of error broadly lie around 2ppts and 6 ppts), which is lower than the difference in benefit receipt, but this is to be expected given the caveats associated with the employment data that are noted above.

Figure 6.3 Proportion of intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) participants that are in employment and not on benefits

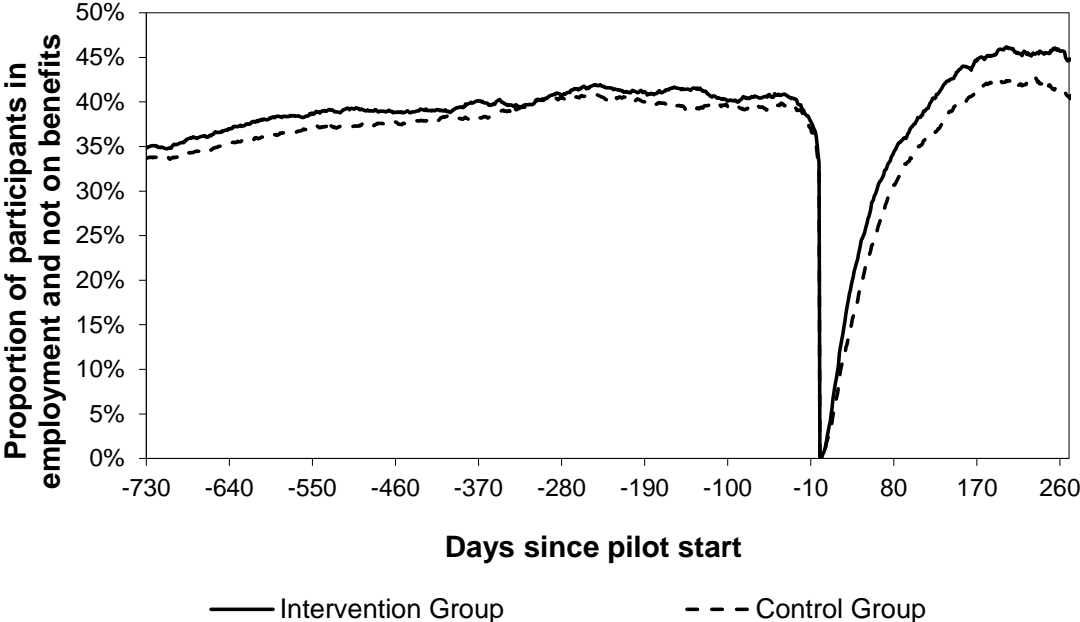
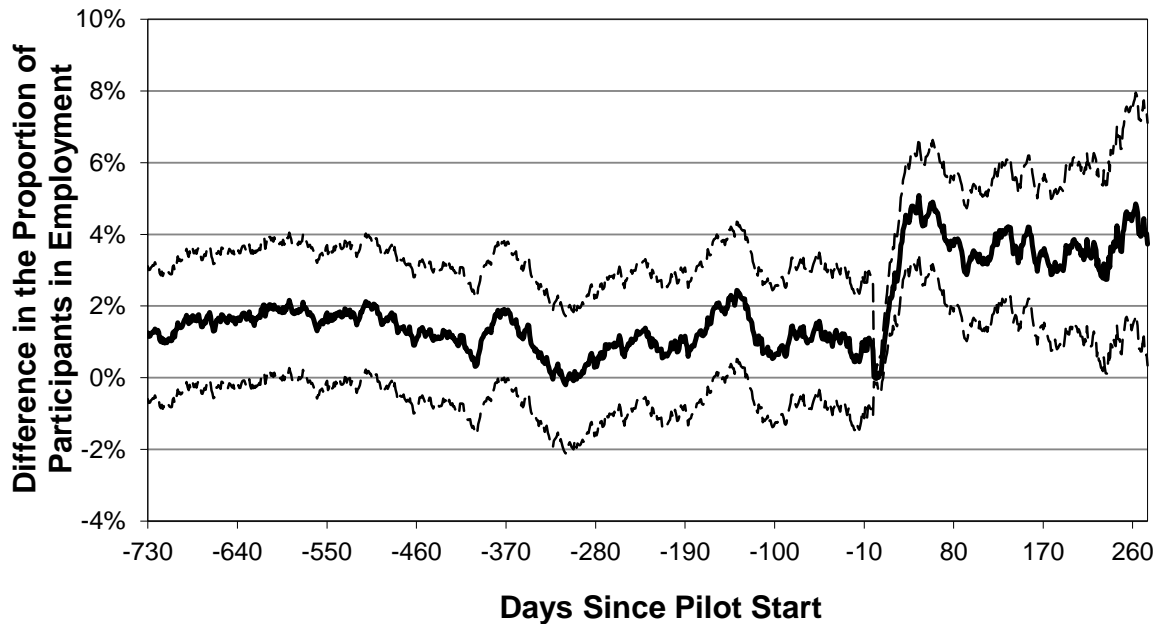


Figure 6.4 Difference in the proportion of intervention (IAP) and control (BAU) group participants that are in employment



Note: The solid line shows the central estimate of the difference. The dashed lines show the upper and lower 95% confidence intervals. Where the difference in figure 6.4 is positive more people in the IAP group are in employment compared to the BAU group.

6.3.3 Cumulative impacts

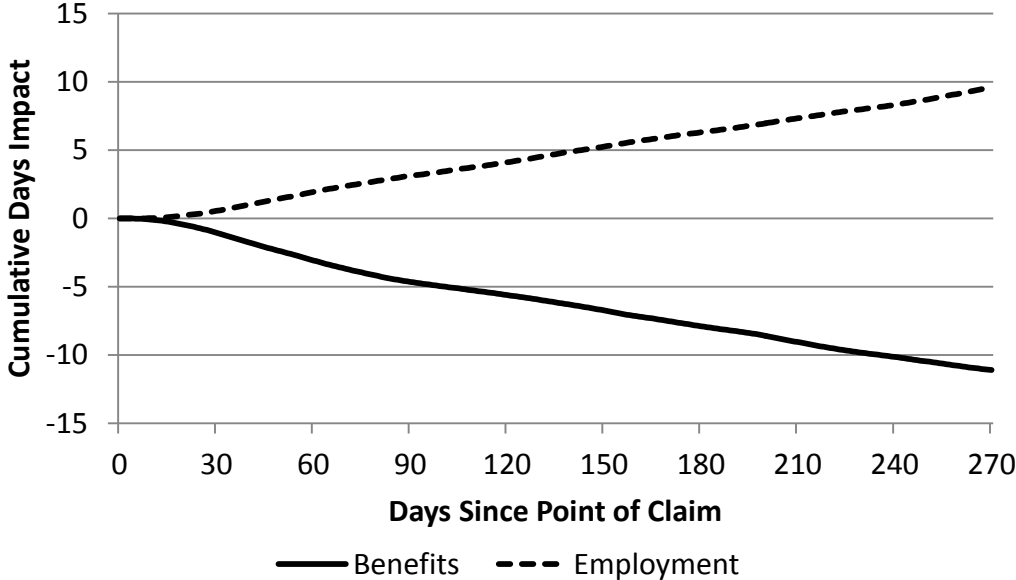
Figure 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate the effect that IAP has at particular points in time after joining the trial. We now consider the cumulative effects, which better describe the totality of the impact to date.

We are able to track every participant for approximately four months after the start of the JSA claim that led to them participating in the trial. Beyond then we can track fewer and fewer people as we considered increasingly longer-term outcomes because the people who joined IAP or its control group more recently cannot be tracked for as long as the people who joined earlier in the pilot recruitment period. . Beyond approximately 9 months, owing to the lower numbers of participants that contribute to the measure, the difference in benefit receipt is no longer statistically significant. Therefore, we present in this report cumulative impacts for the first 9 months. This does not mean that a more complete analysis of all participants will not show larger impacts. Indeed, as can be seen from figure 6.2, after 9 months the central estimate is still not zero. However, neither can we be sure that the difference is not due to random variation.

Regardless, after 9 months, the cumulative impact of IAP upon benefits amounts to -11 days. The minus sign indicates that IAP participants are less likely to be on DWP primary benefits than then control group. The confidence interval for this measure is -

5.5 to -17 days. The equivalent employment impact is 9.7 days with a confidence interval of 4.2 to 15 days. These are positive numbers because IAP participants are more likely to be in employment than the control group.

Figure 6.5 Cumulative impacts upon benefits and employment



6.3.4 Subgroup impacts

We complete this chapter with an overview of the impacts measured for particular subgroups of IAP participants. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 show our central estimates of the cumulative (over 9 months) additional days off benefit and in employment for each subgroup. Also shown are the margins of error, represented by the lower and upper bounds of the range in which we can be 95% sure the true value lies within. The margins of error are larger than those for the overall impact because the sample sizes of the subgroups are smaller than the overall number of people participating in the pilot.

Considering each subgroup in its own right, we are unable to confirm that IAP did have an impact for certain subgroups, namely, those aged 25 to 44, BAME participants, disabled people, parents, lone parents and repeat claimants. This is largely because of the small numbers of people in those subgroups and therefore the wider margins of error. Because the margins of error cover a wide range of values, we are unable to rule out the possibility that the difference in outcomes is due to chance alone.

The wide margins of error for all subgroups also mean that we cannot unambiguously say whether one subgroup impact is larger or smaller than another. Whilst we do measure differences, they may be down to chance and not because of differential impacts of IAP.

Table 6.2 Subgroup benefit impacts (additional days off benefit)

Subgroup	Central estimate	Lower bound ¹	Upper bound ¹
All	-11	-5.5	-17
Male	-10	-3.1	-17
Female	-13	-3.8	-23
18 to 24	-13	-3.1	-23
25 to 44	-8.7	0.0	-17
45 or over	-15	-3.2	-26
White	-12	-6.1	-18
BAME ²	-6.5	15	-28
Disabled ³	-11	1.3	-22
Not Disabled	-11	-4.9	-17
Parent ⁴	-7.9	7.3	-23
Lone Parent ⁵	-10	11	-32
Repeat Claimant ⁶	-13	-6.8	-20
Non-Repeat ⁶ Claimant	-6.4	1.8	-15

1 Represents the range of values that we can be 95% certain that the impact for the wider population of JSA claimant would lie within, assuming that the trial participants are representative of that wider population.

2 Does not include cases where the ethnicity is not known

3 Defined according to the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995.

4 Includes dependent children aged under 16. There may be some under-reporting of parental status in our administrative data.

5 For the child details see the definition of parent in point 4 above. We define partnered as receiving the adult dependent allowance. However, we know that partners are under-reported, particularly for Contributions Based cases and therefore we are likely to be over-counting lone parents.

6 Defined as having a DWP primary benefit claim live at some point during the two years prior to the start of the JSA claim that led to trial participation.

Data has been rounded to 2 significant figures.

Table 6.3 Subgroup employment impacts (additional days in employment)

Subgroup	Central estimate	Lower bound ¹	Upper bound ¹
All	9.7	4.2	15
Male	7.2	0.3	14
Female	14	5.0	23
18 to 24	7.1	-2.6	17
25 to 44	9.7	1.2	18
45 or over	14	2.4	25
White	11	4.9	17
BAME ²	4.7	-15	25
Disabled ³	7.5	-2.7	18
Not Disabled	10	3.8	16
Parent ⁴	13	-1.2	27
Lone Parent ⁵	13	-6.5	33
Repeat Claimant ⁶	9.5	3.8	15
Non-Repeat Claimant ⁶	6.1	-2.5	15

1 Represents the range of values that we can be 95% certain that the impact for the wider population of JSA claimant would lie within, assuming that the trial participants are representative of that wider population.

2 Does not include cases where the ethnicity is not known

3 Defined according to the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995.

4 Includes dependent children aged under 16. There may be some under-reporting of parental status in our administrative data.

5 For the child details see the definition of parent in point 4 above. We define partnered as receiving the adult dependent allowance. However, we know that partners are under-reported, particularly for Contributions Based cases and therefore we are likely to be over-counting lone parents.

6 Defined as having a DWP primary benefit claim live at some point during the two years prior to the start of the JSA claim that led to trial participation.

Data has been rounded to 2 significant figures.

7 Appendices

For research and analysis materials used in claimant interviews and IAP service delivery observations, please see the [IAP Trial Evaluation: Claimant Research Report](#)

Appendix A

Work Coach topic guide

Intensive Activity Programme (IAP) Wave 2 Topic Guide – Work Coaches

Aim: To find out about staff experience of the IAP trial and culture change

Essential to Cover:

- Staff perspectives of IAP
- Views of implementation

Opening

- Interview Reference Number
- Introduction
- Thank you for taking part
- Purpose of the research – to gather JCP staff views and experiences of IAP in their office to inform the future of IAP policy
- About us
 - Independent social research team,
 - Note that interviewer is not very familiar with the policy or trial so cannot influence answers
 - Emphasise difference from compliance, evaluation and policy teams
- Confidentiality
 - Individuals/Offices will not be identified
 - Reporting is about IAP in general not individuals/offices
- Publication – findings are not expected to be published but are subject to FOI requests or wider publications on trialling but these will not identify offices/individuals and will report on IAP as a whole
- Consent to be recorded
- Any questions?

Topic Guide

IAP (3-5 mins)

What does interviewee do in the IAP trial?

Prompt: Role / Job Title
Initial Interviews / Facilitating workshops / Follow-up with claimants

Interviewer Note – Clarify which sections of the topic guide you can cover

What do others do?

Prompt: Work Coach / Assistant Work Coach / Work Service Manager / Process in their office

Section 1 - Initial Interview (10 mins)

Who goes onto IAP?

Introducing IAP to claimants

Prompt: Claimant reactions to IAP
Selling IAP to claimants
How did you encourage claimants to participate?

Claimant reactions to being on a trial

Getting started handbook

Prompt: How is it used?
Works well / Improvements

Section 2 - Workshops/Facilitation (Facilitators only, 10 mins)

Workshops

Prompt: What happens in workshops?
How have workshops gone?
Modules
Works well / Improvements

Interviewer Note - Get interviewee to give examples and talk about their actual experience of workshops rather than parroting back the process

What does interviewee do in the workshop?

Views on being a facilitator

What do claimants do in the workshop?

Prompt: How to encourage engagement
Different types of job seekers e.g. professionals and beginners / all the same type

Section 3 - Follow Up (Work Coaches who carry out follow-ups only, 10 mins)

Claimant progress / feedback after the workshops

Prompt: Checking on tasks
 Off-flows
 Claimants who haven't returned to work

Claimant reactions after the workshops

Prompt: Different from before
 Feedback about IAP / trial

Training (5-7 mins)

What training and support did interviewee receive?

Prompt: Who gave this?
 What is it for?
 Content
 Went well / Improvements
 How long did it take to feel confident using training / tools / facilitating
workshops?
 Further support

Interviewer Note – Clarify with interviewee whether it was:

Data Awareness Session (lower priority)

Facilitator Training (Facilitators only)

Local / Office level training

Support from Compliance Team

Documentation / Guidance material

Views of IAP Policy (7-10 mins)

Views of IAP

Prompt: Went well / Effectiveness / Improvements
 How has working in IAP been different to BAU working?
 Enjoyment / Work Coach Job Satisfaction
 Elements of IAP Work Coach might want to continue / use in other work
areas

Who should go onto IAP?

Who does IAP work well for? / not so well?

Views of the Trial (7-10 mins)

Views of being part of a 'trial'

Prompts: Went well / Improvements
 Views on involvement in future trials

Summary

Any other views

Appendix B

Work Service Manager topic guide

IAP Wave 2 Topic Guide – Work Service Managers

Aim: To find out about staff experience of the IAP trial and culture change

Essential to Cover:

- Staff perspectives of IAP
- Views of implementation

Opening

- Interview Reference Number
- Introduction
- Thank you for taking part
- Purpose of the research – to gather JCP staff views and experiences of IAP in their office to inform the future of IAP policy
- About us
 - Independent social research team,
 - Note that interviewer is not very familiar with the policy or trial so cannot influence answers
 - Emphasise difference from compliance, evaluation and policy teams
- Confidentiality
 - Individuals/Offices will not be identified
 - Reporting is about IAP in general not individuals/offices
- Publication – findings are not expected to be published but are subject to FOI requests or wider publications on trialling but these will not identify offices/individuals and will report on IAP as a whole
- Consent to be recorded
- Any questions?

Topic Guide

IAP (5-10 mins)

What does interviewee do in the IAP trial?

What do others do?

Prompt: Work Coach / Assistant Work Coach / Work Service Manager
Process in their office / Office structure / Resourcing
Initial interviews / Facilitating workshops / Follow-up with claimants

Staff (5-10 mins)

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Staff reactions to IAP

Prompt: To trial / IAP programme
When IAP was introduced
Over the course of the trial / Changes over time
All staff / Just some

Staff ways of working

Prompt: How has IAP affected staff ways of working
Workloads
Motivation / Job satisfaction
Views on staff ability to deliver IAP

IAP Policy (10 - 12 mins)

Views of IAP

Prompt: Went well / Effectiveness / Improvements
How has working in IAP been different to BAU working?
Views of IAP tools e.g. data gather tool, workshops
Elements of IAP interviewee might want to continue / use in other work areas

Views of continuing BAU processes with the control group

Effect of IAP of rest of business

Prompt: How has working in IAP been different to BAU working?
Office performance
Effect on BAU working
Went well / Improvements

Training (5-7 mins)

What training and support did interviewee receive?

Prompt: Who gave this?
What is it for?
Content
Went well / Improvements
How long did it take to feel confident using training / tools / facilitating workshops?
Further support

Interviewer Note – Clarify with interviewee whether it was:

Data Awareness Session (lower priority)
Facilitator Training (Facilitators only)
Local / Office level training
Support from Compliance Team
Documentation / Guidance material

Trial (5-7 mins)

Views on being part of a 'trial'

Prompt: Went well? / Improvements
Views on involvement in future trials

Summary: Any other views

Appendix C

Thematic staff research framework

Trial Resourcing

The aim of this section is to understand how the trial was resourced in the office. We are interested in the roles of different staff members in the trial, issues relating to resourcing and the experience and lessons learned about resourcing IAP.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)

-

Interviewee Role in Trial

Description of the interviewee’s role/tasks/involvement in the trial.

Recording 1

Notes

-

Summary

-

Recording 2

Notes

-

Summary

- Work Coach describes that she takes the new claims; seeing claimants right from the first time they come in, and Work Coach facilitates workshops.

Other Roles in Trial

Any description of colleagues’ roles/tasks/involvement in the trial e.g. who is involved, what are their roles/tasks, who is not involved in the trial and why, etc.

Notes

Summary

-

Resourcing the Trial/Workloads

Descriptions of how the trial was resourced e.g. was becoming a facilitator voluntary or allocated to certain people?, how were resourcing decisions made?, were resourcing

decisions based on Work Coach ability?, and how resourcing the trial impacted on JCP staff workloads?

Notes
Summary

Issues with Resourcing

Any descriptions of human resourcing for the trial/policy going forward e.g. availability of staff to carry out tasks, any problems that arose and how they were resolved. It is expected that there will be limited information here from Work Coaches and more information from Work Service Managers.

Notes
Summary

Staff Reactions

How did staff react to the introduction of the trial and IAP? Were they happy to participate in the trial?

Notes
Summary

Job Satisfaction

Any descriptions about whether staff are enjoying/not enjoying their role in IAP and why?

Notes
Summary

Other

This is to capture anything unexpected or any views of trial resourcing that don't fit into the above sub-themes.

Notes
Summary

Views of IAP Policy

The purpose of this section is to collate information about interviewees' understanding and fairly 'superficial' reactions to IAP Policy (i. e. reactions such as 'I really like IAP' or 'I really hate IAP'), and improvements to the high-level descriptions and aims of the policy. Here we

want to separate out the views of IAP as a policy from the specifics of IAP programme delivery or views of IAP being a trial which will be covered in other sub-themes.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)

Understanding

What explanations of IAP were given by interviewees?

Notes
Summary

Views

Any views of IAP policy overall – we’ve split this into positive and negative views and suggestions for improvements with an ‘other’ sub-theme for anything that doesn’t quite fit. The purpose of this sub-theme is to gather qualitative data on JCP staff views and perceptions of the workshops.

Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Summary

Other

This is to capture anything unexpected or any views of IAP policy that don’t fit into the above sub-themes.

Notes
Summary

Training

JCP offices were provided with a number of different training courses and some offices ran their own training. Here we want to separate out the different training undertaken and identify what went well and what improvements could be made. If a Work Coach doesn’t explicitly state which type of training course they are talking about, but you can make a comprehensive guess about which it is then please do so but make sure you note this as such e.g. insert **[analyst assumption]**. If on the other hand it is difficult to identify then please use the ‘Other’ sub-theme.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)

--

Data Awareness Training

This was a short (up to 2 hour training course) usually provided in-house instructing JCP staff on how to carry out the allocation process including setting markers on LMS and using the data gather tool.

Facilitator Training

This was a 2-3 day course provided by the IAP team instructing JCP staff about the workshops and how to be a ‘facilitator’.

Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Summary

Local/Office Level Training

Any descriptions of training that the individual JCP ran in-house.

Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Summary

Support from Compliance Team

Any descriptions of the support provided by the compliance and support teams e.g. did JCP staff know how to contact someone if they had a problem, were problems dealt with quickly, etc.

Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Summary

Documentation / Guidance Material

JCP staff were provided with some guidance documentation that was available on the DWP intranet and via email.

Positive

Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Summary

Other

This is to capture anything unexpected or any views of training for IAP that don't fit into the above sub-themes.

Notes
Summary

IAP Products

Here we are interested in gathering JCP staff views on the role and effectiveness of the products produced for the trial to understand how they were used, whether they were effective and what improvements could be made if rolled out in the future.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)

Getting Started Handbook

The Getting Started Handbook was a hand-out that was to be emailed out to claimants before they came into JCP to prompt claimants into thinking about their job-seeking and begin creating a CV for example. Here we are interested in understanding how the handbook was used, Work Coach views on it and any improvements or suggestions staff have about the product.

How was the GSH used
Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Other
Summary

Modules

There were 12 modules designed for the IAP Curriculum that covered aspects such as CV skills, interviewing, job search locations and aimed to establish claimants as professional job-seekers as early in their claim as possible. Here we are interested in understanding how

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these modules were used, Work Coach views on the modules and any improvements or suggestions staff have about the product. It is likely that there will be different colloquial names for the modules such as ‘topics’, ‘workshop activities’, etc.

How the modules were used
Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Other
Summary

Activity Sheets

Claimants were provided with activity sheets to support and reinforce the learning and discussions that took place in the modules. Claimants had to complete activities related to each of the modules taught in the workshops and had to show JCP their progress in doing so. Here we are interested in understanding how these activity sheets were used, Work Coach views on them and any improvements or suggestions staff have about the product. It is likely that there will be colloquial names for the activity sheets such as ‘homework’, ‘sheets claimants were sent home with’, etc.

How were the activity sheets used
Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Other
Summary

Workshops

Claimants were required to complete two 90 minute workshops to work through the IAP curriculum (modules). The aim of these sessions was to enable claimants to set themselves up as established job-seekers as early in their claim as possible. There was an emphasis that these sessions were ‘knowledge sharing sessions’ and that JCP staff were facilitators of discussion between claimants rather than telling claimants what and how they needed to go about their jobsearch. Here we are interested in understanding how workshops were run on the ground, what role JCP staff actually took, JCP staff views of the workshops and their effectiveness and perceived engagement and impact on claimants.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)

-

Practicalities

Any information given about the carrying out the workshops e.g. the content and length of the workshops.

Notes

Summary

Role

Description of the interviewee’s role/tasks/involvement in the workshops. It is likely for there to be some duplication/overlap between this and the ‘Interviewee Role in the Trial’ sub-theme.

Notes

-

Summary

-

Notes

Summary

-

Views

Any views of the workshops – we’ve split this into positive and negative views and suggestions for improvements with an ‘other’ sub-theme for anything that doesn’t quite fit. The purpose of this sub-theme is to gather qualitative data on JCP staff views and perceptions of the workshops. Here we want to separate out the views of the workshops from views of IAP policy overall.

Positive

Negative

Solutions/Improvements

Summary

Claimant Engagement/Response

Notes

Summary

Other

This is to capture anything unexpected or any views of the workshops that don't fit into the above sub-themes.

Notes
•
Summary
•

Claimants

The purpose of this theme is to collate JCP staff's perspectives on claimants' responses to IAP and being on a trial, how JCP dealt with different reactions/claimant situations and whether they think IAP is having a positive or negative impact on claimants and off-flows.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)
•

Claimant Reactions to IAP

How did claimants react? This could be at any stage of the process from 'walking in the door' to the point of attending the final IAP follow-up after the second workshop. If it is not obvious or the context of when the reaction was is lost during the 'copying and pasting' could you please add an **[analyst note]** describing it as such.

Notes
Summary
•

Claimant Reactions to Trial

Do Work Coaches tell claimants that they are part of a trial, if so when do they do this and how do claimants react? If they don't, why aren't claimants told and how does this impact their reactions?

Notes
Summary

Selling IAP

An extra 10 minutes was allocated to 'selling' IAP to claimants and although participation in IAP could be mandated, it was hoped that claimants could be encouraged to participate voluntarily in the trial. Here we want to identify how staff 'sold' IAP to claimants in order to get them to volunteer, whether it worked and how long it took to do so.

Notes
Summary

Failure to attend

Participation in IAP could be mandated, but it was hoped that claimant attendance to workshops, etc. would be voluntary. The aim of this question is to identify whether claimants understood what they were required to do during IAP, how motivated claimants were to attend workshops and how deviation was handled by JCP staff e.g. mandations.

Notes
Summary

Impact on Claimants

The purpose of this sub-theme is to understand JCP staff’s perceptions of the impact that IAP has had on claimants.

Notes
Summary

Off-Flows

Here we want to gauge whether staff have noticed any differences in off-flow during the trial and understand whether this is because of the impact of IAP or something else.

Notes
Summary

Other

This is to capture anything unexpected or any views of claimants that don’t fit into the above sub-themes.

Notes
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Summary
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Follow-up

At the end of both workshops, claimants are contacted to follow-up on their progress through the activity sheets and with their job-search. Here we are interested in understanding how these follow-ups were carried out, Work Coach views on them and any improvements or suggestions staff have about the follow-ups.

Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)
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Notes (Optional – for people who prefer to split the transcript into over-arching themes first and then use this to split into the sub themes)
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Practicalities

Any descriptions of how the follow-ups were carried out.

Notes
Summary

Views

Any views of the follow-ups – we’ve split this into positive and negative views and suggestions for improvements with an ‘other’ sub-theme for anything that doesn’t quite fit. The purpose of this sub-theme is to gather qualitative data on JCP staff views and perceptions of the follow-ups.

Positive
Negative
Solutions/Improvements
Summary

Other

This is to capture anything unexpected or any views of the follow-ups that don’t fit into the above sub-themes.

Notes
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Summary
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Ways of Working

Difference to BAU Working

Here we are interested in collating evidence on how Work Coaches view the difference between IAP ways of working and how they were working before. It is likely that there will be overlap between this subtheme and the Workshop sub themes. The key policy question being answered by this section is about how the JCP staff view the culture change emphasised in IAP.

Notes
Summary

Other

For anything that doesn’t fit into any of the previous themes and your views.

Other

Anything that doesn't fit into the previous themes. Try to use this theme as minimally as possible.

Notes
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Summary

Your Views

Here we want you to note down any questions you think we should go back and ask the interviewer/note taker/interviewee themselves. This is also the place to feedback any issues to the LM Qual Team on ways to improve the research process (interviews or analysis) that may arise when you are completing the framework.