

DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – November 2014

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Business is GREAT Britain.

There's never been a better time to start a business in the UK. In 2013 half a million businesses were created with twenty thousand benefitting from start-up loans from a specially created allocation pot of £100 million. UK Export Finance has provided support to the tune of £2.3 billion for 130 companies of which 91 were smaller businesses.

The *Business is GREAT Britain* campaign began a year ago as part of the Government's wider commitment to make it easier for small businesses to grow.

Help available includes:

- Up to 100% tax relief over five years if you invest in new products and services.
- Grants of up to £1,500 to support firms that hire an apprentice.
- Up to £2,000 match funding to seek strategic advice with an accredited adviser through the Growth Voucher programme.
- Up to £3,000 to connect your business to super-fast broadband.
- Employment Allowance, which gives smaller employers £2,000 off their National Insurance contributions (450,000 small businesses).

For further information including advice, access to finance and people, and more, log on to www.greatbusiness.gov.uk

New time limit for Jobseeker's Allowance EEA claimants.

Since 10 November, migrants from the European Economic Area, (EEA) residing in the UK as a jobseeker are only able to claim Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) for a period 91 days.

A short extension to this period will be considered if the claimant can provide evidence that they have a genuine prospect of finding work after the period has elapsed. JSA claims will stop if the claimant is unable to provide suitable evidence.

For more information on JSA [click here](#)

Scotland and Wales to introduce English Language requirement.

From 27 November, anyone claiming JSA who are subject to intensive work search requirements in Scotland and Wales will undergo screening to identify English speaking and listening skills that fall below Entry Level 2. In Scotland claimants will be assessed against Access 3 or SCQF level 3.

This will be extended to Universal Credit Claimants who are subject to intensive work search requirements from spring 2015

In Wales where claimants are below entry level 2 in English and Welsh the policy will provide them with the option to improve their spoken language. This will help claimants where the absence of language skills in English or Welsh is the main barrier to finding employment.

Claimants will take part in a full assessment and where appropriate, be mandated to attend training in their language skills to help further improve the prospect of finding suitable employment.

Social Justice Conference marks its 3rd year.

18 November saw the 3rd annual Social Justice Conference in London. With headline topics including the relevance of Social Justice and its contribution to business bottom line, 200 delegates were addressed by Rt. Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP, who also announced the publication of the [2nd Social Justice Progress Report](#).

Leading charities, voluntary groups, local government and businesses were represented by speakers at the conference, including Catherine Sermon from Business in the Community, Jim Bligh from the CBI, and Jocelyn Hillman from Working Chance who talked about the challenges of encouraging companies to take on ex-offenders. This conference focused on the need for the business sector to help create the jobs and opportunities that people need when they are ready to return to employment.

You can read what many of the speakers had to say by visiting our website at [Social Justice: transforming lives](#)