

Back to Work schemes

Jobseeker's Allowance

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Department
for Work &
Pensions

When you claim Jobseeker's Allowance because you are unemployed and expected to look, or prepare for work, there are a range of schemes available to develop your skills and experience to help you find work.

During your time on Jobseeker's Allowance, your work coach may refer you to these schemes. For example if your English or Maths needs improving, or if getting a recognised qualification would help. Or you may do work experience to add some career history to your CV. Your work coach can tell you if the schemes mentioned in this guide are suitable for you.

This guide gives information about the different schemes, including what we expect you to do when you are on one. You should tell your work coach if you have any concerns about what a scheme involves or what is required of you. Your work coach will want you to ask questions so you are able to benefit from being on a scheme. Remember the reason we have these schemes is to help with a return back into work.

Some of the schemes are delivered for Jobcentre Plus by other organisations, which we call 'providers'.

If you feel one of the schemes would help you, then please discuss it with your work coach. Make sure you ask about other local support available through your Jobcentre too.

Please speak to your work coach if you need help understanding this guide, or have any other questions.

Please note:

This guide is intended for people on Jobseekers Allowance. You may be able to do some of these schemes if you claim other benefits (such as Employment and Support Allowance or Income Support). If you are interested in one of these schemes, you should speak to your work coach about whether you can do it and how it may affect your benefit.

Contents

Skills

[go to page 3](#)

We assess what skills you need to start work. If lacking certain skills is the main thing stopping you getting a job, we will refer you to a skills assessment or training.

If it is not clear what skills you need to help you find work you'll be referred for an in-depth skills assessment with the National Careers Service in England, My World of Work in Scotland or Careers Wales.

Sector-based work academy

[go to page 5](#)

You may be able to attend a sector-based work academy if you live in England or Scotland. It will help you to develop the skills and behaviours employers are looking for in new employees.

A sector-based work academy offers training and work experience in a particular job type. At the end, you'll either get a job interview or help with the employer's application process.

Traineeship

[go to page 7](#)

A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience that unlocks the great potential of young people and prepares them for their future careers by helping them to become 'work ready'.

Designed to help young people aged 16 to 24 who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience, traineeships provide the essential work preparation training, English, maths and work experience needed to secure an apprenticeship or employment

Work experience

[go to page 9](#)

You may be able to volunteer to do a work experience opportunity. Work experience usually lasts for 2 to 8 weeks, and you'll normally be expected to do 25 to 30 hours a week.

We call employers who offer work experience opportunities 'host employers' and it is referred to as 'work experience'.

New Enterprise Allowance

[go to page 11](#)

This scheme helps people to start their own business, and offers business mentoring and financial support if you want to become self-employed.

You'll need to have your business idea assessed by a mentoring provider, and if you are accepted onto the scheme, you'll then have support to produce your business plan.

You may also be able to apply for the weekly New Enterprise Allowance financial support.

Benefit sanctions

[go to page 15](#)

A benefit sanction is when your money is stopped or reduced for a certain period. Sanctions usually happen if you haven't met the conditions for getting benefit, including refusing to take part or complete certain activities or schemes.

Training or other help to gain new skills

If you don't have the type of skills employers are looking for, you may be offered the support needed to improve your skills, including having your skills assessed, and/or attending training to help you get the skills needed to move into, and stay in work.

Your Work Coach may ask you to take action to improve your skills. You may be asked to:

- Meet with a careers adviser to discuss your skills and job aims
- Meet with a training provider (e.g. at a college) to discuss training
- Complete a training course.

This may be agreed as part of your claimant commitment. If so, you must complete this activity or your benefits may be reduced or stopped. This is called a **benefit sanction**.

A careers adviser will help you consider the type of jobs you might like to do, the skills you have and how training may improve your chances of finding work or a better-paid job.

A training provider will look to assess:

- Your English, maths, and Information & Computer Technology (ICT) skills
- Your spoken language skills, if English is not your first language
- Any job-specific skills or qualifications you already have
- Other work skills from previous jobs or work experience.

How long does it last for?

How much time you spend in training will depend on the type of course and the help you need to improve your skills. Training for specific jobs – such as customer service training – typically lasts one to two weeks. Training to improve your English, maths or computer skills will usually be longer. Your work coach will explain what the course involves and when you need to attend.

When can I take part?

When you attend your 1st work coach interview, they will discuss with you if assessing your skills and starting appropriate training is suitable for you.

Do I have to attend?

If you are receiving Jobseekers Allowance because you are unemployed, you **must** attend and complete any activity agreed with your Work Coach and recorded on your Claimant Commitment.

If you are claiming Employment Support Allowance or Income Support because you have a health condition or caring responsibilities, your work coach will tell you what you are required to do.

If you fail to attend an interview with a careers adviser, complete the skills assessment or attend the training course as agreed by your Work Coach, without good reason, your benefit could be reduced or stopped. This is called a **benefit sanction**.

If you do start training and you're asked to leave because of gross misconduct (such as stealing, violence or verbal abuse), your benefit may be sanctioned.

What happens if I don't attend or take part?

Part 1 of the Jobseekers Act 1995, the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996 and the Jobseeker's Allowance (Schemes for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) Regulations 2013 will apply.

It is important that you attend, take part in and complete the skills assessment or training. Your benefit will be stopped or reduced if you fail to do so and cannot give good reason. This is called a sanction.

Please [see page 15](#) for more about sanctions.

Must I take part in Skills Training if my work coach has told me to?

Yes. If your work coach has sent you on the Skills Training scheme, you will need to take part in and complete the course. If you cannot give good reason why you did not, your benefit will be stopped or reduced.

You should discuss the scheme with your work coach, so you understand why you should do the course. Any training the work coach sends you to will be to improve your skills to help you get a job. If your job goals change, then it's important you tell your work coach.

Will I still need to go to Jobcentre meetings and look for work?

If you're on Jobseeker's Allowance, you'll normally still have to sign on, so if your training will stop you signing on at your usual time, you must contact your work coach in advance. Your work coach will also tell you if they expect you to look for work while you're on training. This will depend on the number of hours you are in training and your individual circumstances.

You'll also have to attend any other meetings at the Jobcentre you are asked to attend. You'll need to do this if you're on Universal Credit as well, as your work coach will want to check that you're carrying out any actions that have been agreed as part of your Claimant Commitment, as well as whether there have been any changes in your circumstances.

Again, if your training will stop you going to a Jobcentre meeting, as agreed with your work coach, you should contact them in advance.

What happens if I get a job?

If you get a job or your Jobseeker's Allowance claim stops, you should contact your Jobcentre work coach.

Sector-based work academy

Sector-based work academies are available in England and Scotland. They are designed to help people who are ready to start work, but who may need to learn the skills and behaviours that employers in particular industries look for in new employees.

If your work coach discusses a sector-based work academy with you, you can decide whether or not to take part, but once you've agreed to join you must complete certain parts of the scheme. Your chances of getting and keeping a job with the host employer, or another employer offering similar work, will be improved by completing a sector-based work academy.

The sector-based work academy scheme is used by employers to help them recruit into job sectors with a high demand for staff. So the type of sector-based work academy on offer locally will vary. A sector-based work academy is designed to help you build confidence in a way that improves your job prospects and adds to your CV.

How long does it last for?

The sector-based work academy lasts up to 6 weeks and gives you training and work experience in a particular job type. At the end, you'll get either a job interview or help with the employer's application process.

When can I take part?

Your work coach will discuss with you if a sector-based work academy is suitable for you.

Do I have to attend?

Deciding to accept the offer of a sector-based work academy is entirely voluntary. But once you have agreed to start, and you are receiving Jobseekers Allowance because you are unemployed, you **must** complete the pre-employment training and attend the guaranteed job interview (if included).

If you fail to complete the parts of the sector-based work academy you are required to do without good reason, your benefit could be reduced or stopped.

The sector-based work academy also includes work experience. This is not something you will be required to do but it is in your interest to do so and we encourage you to take part wherever possible. Work experience is invaluable, and allows both you and the host employer to see whether you're suited to the type of work on offer.

Your benefit will not be stopped or reduced (sanctioned) if you decide not to take up the work experience placement.

If you do start a sector-based work academy and you're asked to leave because of gross misconduct (such as stealing, violence or verbal abuse), including during work experience, your benefit may be sanctioned.

When can I take part?

A sector-based work academy is open to you from day 1 of your claim, as long as you don't need basic training in English or Maths to find work.

Do I have to attend?

No. Joining a sector-based work academy is voluntary. But once you have agreed to join, you **must** complete the pre-employment training, and attend the guaranteed job interview (if included). If you can't give a good reason for doing so your benefit will be stopped or reduced.

You may have to travel to the employer's place of work or to where the training is held. You can get help for the cost of your journey to the training venue by public transport and any appropriate childcare costs.

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Your benefit will not be stopped or reduced (sanctioned) if you decide not to take up the work experience placement.

If you do start a sector-based work academy and you're asked to leave because of gross misconduct (such as stealing, violence or verbal abuse), including during work experience, your benefit may be sanctioned.

Part 1 of the Jobseekers Act 1995, the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996 and the Jobseeker's Allowance (Schemes for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) Regulations 2013 will apply.

Please [see page 15](#) for more about sanctions.

Do I have to accept the job if it is offered to me following the guaranteed interview?

People receiving Jobseeker's Allowance because of unemployment are required to take a job when offered. If you are offered a job or an apprenticeship following the sector-based work academy guaranteed interview, your work coach may require you to accept it.

If this happens but you do not accept the job, it is called 'refusal of employment' and your benefit will be stopped or reduced (sanctioned) for not accepting the job unless you have a good reason. You should speak to your work coach to find out more information.

Will I still need to go to Jobcentre meetings and look for work?

You'll normally have to still sign on, attend any other meetings at the Jobcentre and be actively looking for work. If being on the sector-based work academy will stop you signing on at your usual time, or going to other Jobcentre meetings, you must contact your work coach in advance.

What happens if I get a job?

If you get a job or your Jobseeker's Allowance claim stops, you should contact your Jobcentre work coach.

Traineeships

Traineeships are an opportunity to gain real work experience, job skills and improve your English and maths, if needed. The programme operates in England only and aims to unlock the great potential of young people, help them become “work-ready” and prepare them for their future careers.

Designed to help young people aged 16 to 24 who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience, traineeships provide the essential work preparation training, English, maths (if you do not hold a Level 2 qualification) and work experience needed to secure an apprenticeship or employment

The training will be delivered by a local college or provider, and your work experience placement within a traineeship is delivered by an employer and designed with your needs in mind. So the type of placement on offer locally will vary. A traineeship is designed to help you build confidence in a way that improves your job prospects and adds to your CV.

How long does it last for?

A traineeship can last up to 6 months, however, on average most last around 3 months. On completion of your traineeship, you may be offered an apprenticeship or other job, but if not, the employer will offer you an exit interview to discuss what you have been doing, and to plan for the future.

When can I take part?

A traineeship is open to you from day 1 of your claim, your work coach will discuss with you if a traineeship is suitable for you.

Do I have to attend?

It is in your best interests to attend, participate and complete a traineeship – it improves your chances of an apprenticeship or other job, however, should you decide it is not for you, your benefit will not be reduced or stopped if you choose to leave

You must attend the assessment to decide whether or not a traineeship is the right option for you, and whether the right opportunities are available to match your job goal. Failure to attend the assessment without good reason may lead to a benefit sanction

Part 1 of the Jobseekers Act 1995, the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996 and the Jobseeker's Allowance (Schemes for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) Regulations 2013 will apply.

Please [see page 15](#) for more about sanctions.

Do I have to accept the job if it is offered to me during or following the traineeship?

If you are offered a job during or following the traineeship, your work coach is likely to encourage you to accept it, and you will probably be required to accept it. If this happens and you do not accept the job, it is called 'refusal of employment' and you could be sanctioned for not accepting the job unless you have a good reason. You should speak to your work coach to find out more information.

Will I still need to go to Jobcentre meetings and look for work?

You'll normally still have to sign at the Jobcentre for your benefit. Attendance at any other meetings at the Jobcentre may not be necessary. If being on the traineeship stops you signing on at your usual time, or going to other Jobcentre meetings, you must contact your work coach in advance.

What happens if I get a job?

If you get a job or your Jobseeker's Allowance claim stops, you should contact your Jobcentre work coach.

Work experience

If you have little or no work history, work experience can help you to get experience with host employers which can add to your CV. Work experience is usually aimed at people aged 18 to 24 years, but can also be useful for older jobseekers. Your work coach will tell you what opportunities are available.

Why should I be interested in work experience?

Work experience gives you the chance to add some vital experience to the career section of application forms and your CV, including having a referee. It also helps with:

- improving your job prospects
- seeing what skills and behaviours employers want from people
- seeing how your skills fit into the workplace
- building your confidence, and
- showing an employer the skills that you have.

What will being on work experience involve?

This will vary, but some examples include working in an office, warehouse, retail store or restaurant. Your duties will be explained by the host employer, but might include things like customer service, stock management or administrative duties.

You'll need to ensure that you show the same standards of behaviours as other employees, especially:

- attendance
- timekeeping
- personal hygiene and appearance, and
- following all Health & Safety rules given to you by the host employer.

How long does it last for?

You can do work experience with a host employer in the area you live in. Work experience lasts for 2 to 8 weeks, and you'll usually be expected to do 25 to 30 hours a week (unless you've agreed restrictions on the hours you can work, known as 'availability', with your work coach).

If the host employer offers you an apprenticeship (which is a paid job with training), and you accept, you can do up to four extra weeks of work experience while the paperwork for your apprenticeship is completed. You'll keep getting benefit until your apprenticeship starts.

When can I take part?

You can take part from week 13 of your Jobseeker's Allowance claim if you're aged 18 to 24. Some people can take part sooner depending on their circumstances, so it is worth speaking to your work coach to see if you can do work experience earlier.

Work coaches may suggest it to claimants aged over 24 if they think they would be suitable.

How can I do a work experience opportunity?

You may find an opportunity yourself or your work coach will identify what's available, and depending on the employer you may have to go through an application process. This might mean completing an application form, or attending an informal interview. This process will help you to build up your application skills.

Your work coach will ask you to sign a data consent form so they are able to share your information to the host employer.

Will this affect my benefit?

You do not have to do work experience and it will not affect your Jobseeker's Allowance if you do not want to take part in an opportunity.

If you receive Jobseeker's Allowance and do start work experience, and you're asked to leave because of gross misconduct (such as stealing, violence or verbal abuse), your benefit may be stopped or reduced (sanctioned).

Will I still need to attend Jobcentre meetings and look for work?

You'll normally have to still sign on, attend any other meetings at the Jobcentre, and be actively looking for work. Your host employer will be aware of this, and your work coach may be able to schedule meetings around your time on work experience.

What happens if I get a job?

If you get a job or your Jobseeker's Allowance claim stops, you should contact your Jobcentre work coach.

New Enterprise Allowance

The New Enterprise Allowance scheme offers business mentoring and financial support if you want to become self-employed. You'll get an interview with a mentoring partner organisation, who will carry out an initial assessment of your business idea.

If you're accepted onto the New Enterprise Allowance scheme then you will work with a business mentor for approximately 8 weeks to produce a business plan. The business plan will then be subject to an approval process.

You can claim the New Enterprise Allowance financial support within 13 weeks of your business plan being approved.

To claim the weekly allowance, you must first close your claim to Jobseeker's Allowance and start trading your business.

How long does it last for?

You'll be in the 'mentoring stage' of New Enterprise Allowance for up to 8 weeks (this can be extended to 12 weeks in exceptional circumstances). Your mentor can continue to support you for a further 6 months while you're getting the weekly New Enterprise Allowance.

The weekly allowance is paid for up to 26 weeks, after approval of your business plan and closure of your benefit claim.

When can I take part?

Anyone can join from day 1 of their claim to Jobseeker's Allowance, **unless**

- you're on the Work Programme,
- you have or have had a sanction because you left your last job voluntarily or were dismissed for misconduct. If so, you can't join until you have claimed benefit for 13 weeks, or
- you stopped running your own business in the 3 months before benefit. You can't join until you have claimed for 13 weeks, and your business idea must be demonstrably different from your previous business.

Your work coach will want to ensure you're ready to join the New Enterprise Allowance scheme, and will discuss whether you have an established idea for your business and if you can commit to exploring further options to turn the idea into a reality.

If your work coach thinks you're right for the New Enterprise Allowance scheme and you wish to proceed, then they will send you to the mentoring provider.

What do I need to do while part of New Enterprise Allowance?

Once you're accepted onto the scheme, you will need to meet these conditions:

- go to all meetings with mentor / mentoring provider organisation, where you've been given at least 24 hours' notice
- do things each week to develop the business proposal, and
- tell Jobcentre Plus within 2 working days if the business idea is no longer being pursued and/or the mentoring relationship ends.

If you don't meet these conditions your benefit will be sanctioned unless you have good reason for why you didn't do so.

Please [see page 15](#) for more about sanctions.

Part 1 of the Jobseekers Act 1995 and the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996 will apply.

My work coach is going to refer me to the New Enterprise Allowance scheme, but I've changed my mind. What should I do?

Before your work coach sets up the meeting with the mentoring provider, they'll check if you still want to take part. If you don't, this will not affect your Jobseeker's Allowance claim as long as you tell your work coach before they make the referral. If you change your mind after you've been referred, but before you start the scheme, inform Jobcentre Plus of your decision as soon as possible. You will not be sanctioned if you change your mind before you start the scheme.

I have been accepted onto New Enterprise Allowance scheme and have decided self-employment is not right for me. What should I do?

If you decide that self-employment isn't right for you while developing your business plan, you can leave the scheme without your benefit being sanctioned. It is essential that you inform Jobcentre Plus of your decision to leave the scheme within 2 working days to avoid a sanction being applied.

Will I still need to go to Jobcentre meetings?

Yes. You will still need to attend Jobcentre meetings and will be expected to supply evidence for how you are progressing your business ideas.

What if I get a job as well as, or instead of, being self-employed?

If you get a job, you should contact your Jobcentre work coach for more information.

The Work and Health Programme

The Work and Health Programme is delivered by private, public and voluntary providers to deliver sustained employment for disabled people, early access groups and the long term unemployed.

When you join the Work and Health Programme your provider will tell you about the support they will be able to give you and how they can help you. Together you'll make an action plan of things you need to do to prepare for work.

When will I be referred to the Work and Health Programme?

If you claim Jobseekers Allowance and have not moved into employment within 24 months of your claim you will be considered for referral to the Work and Health Programme after 24 months.

Can I be referred before this?

You can volunteer to join the Work and Health Programme if you are from an early access priority group:

- ex-offenders (someone who has completed a custodial sentence or a community sentence), or offender (someone who is serving a community sentence)
- a carer
- an ex-carer
- a homeless person
- a former member of HM Armed Forces
- an HM Armed Forces reservist
- a partner of current or former Armed Forces personnel
- a person for whom a drug/alcohol dependency (including a history of) presents a significant barrier to employment
- a care leaver
- refugee
- young person in gangs
- victim of domestic violence

How long does it last for?

Your Work and Health Programme provider will support you for 456 days (15 months), even if your benefit changes or you find a job.

If you find a job they can increase the support to 639 days (21 months) if you need this.

What will happen during the Work and Health Programme?

Because the Work and Health Programme is tailored to individuals the type of support will be personalised to the needs of each participant. Examples of the type of support available includes participants having a personal key worker with regular face to face contact, mentoring and peer support, integrated access to specialist support networks at a local level including health and wellbeing professionals and support from dedicated employer experts with knowledge of local job opportunities.

Where will my Work and Health Programme meetings be held?

Your Work and Health Programme provider will send you a letter to let you know the time, date and place of your meeting

What happens if I don't go to meetings or do the activities they ask me to do?

Part 1 of the Jobseekers Act 1995, the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996 and the Jobseeker's Allowance (Schemes for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) Regulations 2013 will apply.

You must complete any activity your provider tells you to do; this may include applying for employment opportunities or attending job interviews. If you don't then your benefit will be

sanctioned, unless you have good reason for why you didn't do so. It's very important that you tell your provider if you're having problems or cannot take part in the required activity at any time for any reason.

Just like with your Jobcentre meetings, if you can't go to a Work and Health Programme meeting you must let your provider know in good time.

What am I expected to do during the Work and Health Programme?

While you're on the Work and Health Programme you must:

- do the things your provider ask you to do to prepare for work
- take part in all meetings and phone calls arranged for you by your provider
- apply for a job, attend a job interview or accept a job offer if told to by your provider
- take part in all meetings with your work coach
- tell your provider or your work coach straight away, if you can't do something they've asked and give your reason
- let us and your provider know straightaway if your circumstances change

Benefit sanctions – if you're unemployed and looking for work

If you are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance because you're unemployed and looking for work, there are some things we expect you to do to keep receiving your benefit.

You'll meet a work coach who will find out about your situation. They will:

- help identify what you must do to find work (these actions will be added to your Claimant Commitment)
- meet you regularly to review your progress.

You may need to take part in an employment scheme. Employment schemes are delivered by specialist organisations to help you find and stay in work. Your scheme provider may also identify things you must do to find work.



It's your responsibility to do all you can to find work. In return, you'll get your benefit payment and our support.

Most people do all they can. If you don't, your benefit payment could be temporarily stopped or reduced (a sanction), or your claim could be ended.

What must I do to keep my full benefit payment?

You'll get your full benefit payment as long as you:

- go to meetings on time with your work coach and take part in interviews
- apply for suitable jobs your work coach tells you about
- do any activity your work coach tells you to do to find work, such as attending a training course or updating your CV
- do all you can to find work, including taking actions in your Claimant Commitment
- take part in employment schemes when your work coach tells you to. You'll need to meet your employment scheme provider on time and take actions they tell you to take. You'll need to continue to meet with your work coach and do the activity set out in your Claimant Commitment.

If you can't or haven't done these things, tell your work coach or employment scheme provider why straight away.

If you can show you have good reason, you'll continue to get your full benefit payment. Provide as much information as you can, as quickly as possible. For example, call your work coach if you can't attend a meeting and let them know why.



If you don't do these things, and you don't have good reason, your benefit payment could be stopped or reduced for a period of time, or your claim could be ended.

It's important that you understand what you must do to get your benefit payment, and what will happen if you don't do this. Ask your work coach to explain if you're not sure.

How long could my benefit payment be stopped or reduced for?

How long your benefit is stopped or reduced for depends on:

- the reason you claim benefit – for example, if you were dismissed for misconduct from your last job, or left it without good reason
- what you haven't done to find work
- whether your benefit payment has been stopped, or your claim has been ended, in the last year, and the reason(s) for this.

Types of benefit sanction

You will get a lower-level or intermediate-level **sanction** if you receive JSA if:

- You don't go to meetings on time with your work coach and take part in interviews
- You don't do what your work coach tells you to do to find work, such as attend a training course or update your CV
- You don't take part in employment schemes* when your work coach tells you to
- You don't meet your employment scheme provider on time or take actions they tell you to take
- You start a new claim for JSA within 13 weeks of your last claim being ended because you were not doing all you could to find work



*The employment schemes covered by this type of sanction include:

Skills Conditionality, the Work Programme, New Enterprise Allowance, Work and Health Programme and sector-based work academies (training). There may be other schemes running locally and your work coach will tell you whether you are expected to attend one of these.

If you're on Jobseeker's Allowance, these are also the sanctions for work experience (including as part of sector-based work academies or the Work Programme) if you choose to take the work experience opportunity then are dismissed for gross misconduct.

Your Jobseeker's Allowance will be stopped for 4 weeks or 13 weeks depending on the number of occasions you have been sanctioned in the last year.

You will get a **high level sanction** if:

- You were dismissed for misconduct from your last job.
- You left your last job, or lost pay as a result of misconduct or voluntarily leaving your last job, without good reason
- You don't take actions to apply for suitable jobs your work coach or a provider tells you about
- You don't take a job if offered

A high level sanction means that your Jobseeker's Allowance will be stopped, for 13, 26 or 156 weeks depending on the number of occasions you have been sanctioned in the last year.

If you are not doing all you can to look for and be available for work

If you are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance your claim could be **ended** if you are not available for, or doing all you can, to find work. You can claim again if you commit to doing all you can to find work. However, your benefit may be stopped at the start of your new claim.

What should I do if my benefit payment is stopped or my claim is ended?

If your benefit payment is stopped, you should continue to do all you can to find work. If you don't, your benefit payment could be stopped for a longer period, or your claim could be ended.

If you receive housing benefit or a council tax reduction, you should contact your local council straight away if your Jobseeker's Allowance is stopped or reduced, or your Jobseeker's Allowance claim is ended. You should contact them to understand what information they'll want from you to ensure you still get any housing benefit and council tax reduction that you may be entitled to.

Hardship payments

If your benefit payment is stopped, and you don't have enough money to live on, you may be able to get a hardship payment. This is a reduced amount of benefit. Contact us if you want to understand more about hardship payments and whether you can apply

What if I don't agree with the decision to stop or reduce my benefit payment, or end my claim?

Provide us with full information

If you're told your benefit payment may be stopped or reduced, or your claim may be ended, you should provide new information straight away about why you haven't attended meetings on time or taken actions.

A DWP decision maker, rather than your work coach or employment scheme provider, will decide if you have good reason.

If they decide there isn't good reason, they will decide how long to stop your benefit payment for, or whether to end your claim. You can ask why a decision has been made by contacting us.

Ask us to reconsider the decision

If you think the decision is wrong, you can ask for it to be looked at again within one month of your benefit being stopped, reduced or your claim being closed. Explain why the decision is wrong and show any evidence you have. The decision will be looked at again and we will send you a letter to tell you what has been decided and why. We call this letter a 'Mandatory Reconsideration Notice'.

Appeal

If you disagree with the Mandatory Reconsideration Notice, you can appeal to a tribunal. You must wait for the 'Mandatory Reconsideration Notice' before you start an appeal. You can download an appeal form on www.gov.uk by searching 'SSCS1'.

The mandatory Back to Work schemes outlined in this leaflet are covered by the following legislation:
The Jobseeker's Allowance (Scheme for Assisting Persons to Obtain Employment) Regulations 2013
Part 1 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012

This leaflet provides general information only and is not a complete and authoritative statement of the law.