

Withdrawn

This publication is withdrawn.
The publication is no longer current.

Section 1 (2017) – Work Choice Introduction and Overview

This Section pertains to all referrals to Work Choice during the contracts' extension period in England and Wales effective from April 2017; specifically from 25th April for contracts originally awarded in 2010, and from 7th April for Remploy.

For guidance pertaining to all referrals to Work Choice made prior to this extension period please see the previous version of Work Choice Provider Guidance which has been retained on GOV.UK for reference:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwp-provider-guidance>

1.1. This section covers:

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Introduction

1.2. This chapter of DWP Provider Guidance supports you, the Prime Provider, in the delivery of the Work Choice Programme on behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. It forms part of your contract and provides guidance on processes and requirements, supporting the programme contract details and the legal arrangements for delivery.

1.3. This guidance **must** be read in conjunction with:

- Specification to Invitation to Tender; and
- your Work Choice Contract Package Information including any deeds of variation; and
- [DWP Generic Guidance](#) – via the hyperlinks which are embedded throughout this Programme-Specific Guidance.

1.4. If there is any conflict between your contract and this guidance your contract takes precedence. If there is any conflict between the specification and this guidance in relation to DWP's internal procedures and processes, this guidance takes precedence.

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- 1.5. You must ensure that any organisations with which you have a sub-contractual relationship also have access to, and read, this guidance.

Universal Credit (UC)

Universal Credit is available to single people throughout Great Britain and to families and couples in some jobcentre areas. Phased roll-out of Universal Credit will continue over a planned period of time. For details please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-transition-to-full-service>

If your programme participant is a Universal Credit claimant, some parts of this provider guidance will vary.

UC Variations are highlighted throughout using these grey boxes.

Where clearly indicated, Work Choice Providers should follow the slightly amended instructions in these grey boxes when providing Work Choice to Universal Credit claimants.

Providers must note that should a Universal Credit claimant move out of a Universal Credit area, they will remain a Universal Credit claimant and UC processes and systems will apply for this individual in the new CPA.

For the most up to date information regarding Universal Credit (UC), including UC live areas and claimant groups please refer to the GOV.UK website at: <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>.

Full information about UC for Providers of DWP Programmes is to be found on DWP's Universal Credit Toolkit page for Partner Organisations: <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit-toolkit-for-partner-organisations>

Guidance for Remploy Ltd only – April 2015

Remploy Ltd began commercial delivery of the Work Choice programme **from 7th April 2015**. Programme delivery Terms and Conditions vary slightly for this provider.

Remploy Ltd only should note and follow certain alternative instructions or information contained in these yellow-shaded boxes, where they appear throughout this guidance.

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Key Principles of the Work Choice Programme

- 1.6. The Work Choice Programme replaced the Work Preparation and WORKSTEP programmes and the Job Introduction Scheme. The Key principles of the Work Choice Programme are:
- a greater focus on those who need specialist support;
 - less prescription and greater flexibility;
 - better links between elements of provision;
 - provision for all types of disability;
 - more opportunity for the customer to exercise choice and control;
 - a greater focus on job outcomes;
 - improved support for people in either employment or self employment;
 - improved progression to unsupported employment; and
 - a greater emphasis on achieving potential within longer-term supported employment.

The DWP Customer Charter

- 1.7. DWP is committed to provide high quality and efficient services to our customers. The DWP Customer Charter sets out the standards that customers can expect and what their responsibilities are in return. DWP is dedicated to raising the standards of all our contracted provision and require all providers and sub-contractors to embed the principles of the Customer Charter into the services they deliver on DWP's behalf. The "shared promise on customer care" developed by the Employment Related Services Association and supported by DWP, makes the commitments given in the DWP Customer Charter more specific for welfare to work providers to sign the Shared Promise, DWP would expect providers to support the commitments contained in it.

Summary of the Work Choice Programme

- 1.8. From 25th April 2017 [7th April for Remploy] the Work Choice programme was re-designed as a three-stage, modular, specialist provision delivered either by yourself as a Prime Provider or through your sub-contractors. The three stages are:
- Referral or Introduction;
 - Module One – The Work Choice Pre-employment Support Module;
 - Module Two – The Work Choice Employment Support Module.
- 1.9. The design of the programme is described in detail in the Sections which follow this introduction.

Types of Customers Supported by Work Choice

1.10. Participation in Work Choice is voluntary. All candidates for Work Choice must be eligible and suitable for the programme. To be eligible they must be of working age¹, resident in England or Wales², and disabled as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_act_2010.aspx

1.11. Suitable candidates for Work Choice:

- experience complex work-related support needs arising primarily from disability; AND
- have requirements in work which cannot immediately be overcome through workplace adjustments which are required under the Equality Act 2010 and/or by Access to Work support; AND
- need support in work as well as help with finding work; AND
- cannot be helped through other DWP programmes*; AND
- following Module One, expect to be able to work for a minimum of 16 hours per week.

* Note: in particular the DEA (or JCP Specialist Adviser / Work Coach) will consider DWP's Specialist Employability Support programme (SES) and select the most suitable option for the customer.

1.12. Target groups for Work Choice are disabled people with complex employment support needs for whom other DWP provision is not suitable and those who are in work but under threat of losing their job as a result of their disability.

1.13. Note: some existing participants whose supported employment began under the Supported Employment Programme (WORKSTEP's predecessor programme) are working fewer than 16 hours. Provided their support needs remain unchanged, they will not be required to increase

¹ The Government increased the age to which all young people in **England** must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until their 18th birthday from 2015.

Raising the participation age (RPA) does not mean young people must stay in school; they will be able to choose one of the following options post-16:

- full-time education, such as school, college or home education
- an apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering full-time (which is defined as 20 hours or more a week). Work Choice is NOT classed as a training provider in this context.

NB There is no upper age limit for participation in Work Choice.

² People currently legally living in Great Britain - UK passport holders (or eligible to hold UK passport); foreign passport holders as long as there is an endorsement in their passport allowing them to undertake paid employment – i.e. there are no employment restrictions/ prohibitions; holders of EU passports (subject to any endorsement prohibiting them from working in the UK).

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their hours to 16 or more upon transferring to the Work Choice programme.

Referral Overview

NOTE: Due to upcoming programme closure, all referrals to the Work Choice Programme have ceased. The following paragraphs are now for reference only.

- 1.14. It must be noted that **you may not recruit directly onto your Work Choice programme.**
- 1.15. The customer's first point of contact for Work Choice will be either the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA), a Jobcentre Plus Specialist Adviser, who will establish both eligibility and the suitability of Work Choice for the customer's needs, or a Statutory Referral Organisation (see below).
- 1.16. Please note, this guidance refers to the DEA throughout. This term should also be understood to mean Jobcentre Plus Specialist Adviser or Work Coach interchangeably.
- 1.17. DEAs will also be the contact point for Jobcentre Plus customers who may wish to discuss issues or feed back concerns about the provision, or delivery of their service, that they have been unable to resolve with their provider. Further information about handling grievances or complaints will be found in [DWP Generic provider Guidance Part 2](#) and in the [Complaint Resolution Core Briefing Pack](#).
- 1.18. As mentioned above, in addition to Jobcentre Plus DEAs, a limited number of Statutory Organisations (e.g. Local Authorities Social Services, Secondary Mental Health Services) will be able to directly introduce suitable disabled people to Work Choice. In this guidance we term these 'Statutory Referral Organisations'. This will be particularly helpful for people with learning disabilities and/or mental health conditions, who might not visit or contact a Jobcentre Plus Office and therefore would not normally come into contact with DEA services.
- 1.19. Processes for identifying Statutory Referral Organisations in your contract package locality are to be found at [Annex 7](#).
- 1.20. When proposing a customer for your provision, the Statutory Referral Organisation will introduce the customer as a potential Work Choice participant. You are required to determine eligibility and suitability for the programme. You must then notify Jobcentre Plus, who will generate the e-referral via the Provider Referrals and Payment (PRaP) system. See [Annex 7](#) for full information.

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Flexible Design Environment

- 1.21. You will deliver Work Choice within a minimally prescriptive service requirement which rewards job outcomes rather than specific service delivered. DWP expects this approach will give its contractors the flexibility to deliver innovative programmes in partnership with a supply chain. However, you are free to deliver directly all or selected aspects of the Work Choice programme yourself. Any prime contractor that delivers an entire programme would effectively operate as a “sole contractor”. (See your contract terms and conditions for full information.)
- 1.22. DWP Performance Management Teams will manage the performance of the contract using the programme specification and this guidance.

European Social Fund (ESF) Match Funding

- 1.23. Your original contract stated that DWP may choose the Work Choice provision to support our European Social Fund (ESF) co-financed programme. In April 2012 DWP notified you of its decision to use Work Choice Provision for (ESF) Match Funding and a formal Variation to the contract was sent out to you.
- 1.24. As Work Choice has been identified as suitable contracts for Match, participants referred **prior** to the 2017 extension period will continue to be used as Match Funding for DWP’s European Social Fund (ESF) 2014-2020, and, **for these referrals**, you must meet the ESF requirements which include:
 - i) Marketing and publicity;
 - ii) Document retention;
 - iii) ESF audit requirements;
 - iv) ESF cross cutting requirements; and
 - v) ESF MI Requirements.
- 1.25. Your Performance Manager will be able to advise you in more detail of the compliance requirements for ESF.
- 1.26. You should be clear: Work Choice provision will continue to be used as Match Funding for DWP’s European Social Fund (ESF) 2014-2020 for participants referred to the Work Choice programme **prior to the 2017 extension**. But Work Choice Provision for participants referred **during** the new contracts extension period in England, commencing April 2017, will **not** be used as match funding.
- 1.27. You will find information and instructions on the ESF MI Requirements for participants referred to the Work Choice programme **prior to the 2017 extension** in Chapter 11 and 11b of DWP Generic Provider guidance. [DWP Generic Guidance](#)

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- 1.28. More general information about administration of the European Social Fund in England and the implications of ESF match funding can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/european-social-fund-2007-to-2013>

Guidance for Remploy Ltd only

Your contract began to be used for ESF match-funding from 29th February 2016 but, as above, match funding will **not** apply to referrals made during the April 2017 contracts extension period in England.

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