

Work Experience equality impact assessment

**Completed by Work Experience Programme Young People and
Employment Division**

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Equality impact assessment for Work Experience

Introduction

1. The Department for Work and Pensions has conducted the following Equality Impact Assessment for Work Experience. The programme was announced on the 4 October 2010 by the Minister for Employment.
2. The Equality Impact Assessment will ensure:
 - a. the Department's strategies, policies and services are free from discrimination;
 - b. due regard is given to equality in decision making and subsequent processes; and
 - c. opportunities for promoting equality are identified.
3. The Equality Impact Assessment considers the impact of Work Experience in terms of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race and religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Background

4. In the publication, "[The Coalition: our programme for government](#)" the Government explicitly committed to:

“seek ways to support the creation of apprenticeships, internships, work pairings, and college and workplace training places as part of our wider programme to Get Britain Working.”
5. Subsequent discussions with Ministers and stakeholders have enabled us to refine these commitments to the proposals set out in this document.

Proposal

6. Work Experience will be part of a package of additional support options to help individuals into work.
7. Work Experience forms part of the Get Britain Working measures which include:
 - New Enterprise Allowance
 - Work Clubs
 - Work Together
8. We are also developing further options to encourage pre-employment training and work placements through Service Academies.

9. The aims of Work Experience are to:
 - help maximise the number of young people moving into employment;
 - help maximise the off flow of young people before entering the Work Programme; and
 - provide young people with quality work experience
10. These measures will be introduced in January 2011 and targeted at fourteen areas across Great Britain. Target areas will use additional two year funding provided to deliver work experience placements. There may be discretion to also offer opportunities in other areas, subject to available resources.
11. Work Experience will form part of a wider menu of additional support options that can be used by Jobcentre Plus to help benefit claimants into work, prior to referral to the Work Programme.
12. Work Experience is focused on young people aged 18-21 who are claiming Jobseekers Allowance and are first time jobseekers and/or are furthest away from the labour market. Businesses who host Work Experience will offer a period of between two to eight weeks. The duration will be determined by looking at the needs of the participant alongside those of the industry. To maximise effectiveness, opportunities will be targeted at customers who have little or no work history, and/or have a low skills base. However, participants will need to demonstrate a willingness to work.
13. Following initial evaluation of the programme in spring 2011, the department will consider whether to extend work experience to a wider age range and other benefit recipients. Employment and Support Allowance work related activity customers will in discussion with their advisers have access from summer 2011.
14. Jobcentre Plus Advisers will be able to direct claimants of Employment and Support Allowance to carry out a specific activity (such as skills training) in order to meet the work related activity requirement). However, work related activity legislation does not allow Employment and Support Allowance claimants to be mandated to activity deemed work, such as work experience. It is expected that Employment and Support Allowance claimants will have a plan tailored to their individual needs and will be able to engage and continue participation in the Work Experience programme on a voluntary basis. The voluntary status of these claimants' participation means they are not subject to sanctions for failure to carry out Work Experience direction.
15. Depending on successful rollout for 18-21 year olds, we intend to consider the case for giving advisers limited discretion to offer work

16. Customers will be eligible to participate on a voluntary basis, from the 13th week of their Jobseeker's Allowance claim. However, from the end of April 2011 regulations are being introduced that will assert that once a placement has been agreed upon, attendance will become mandatory (except for the one-week probationary period) and will be subject to sanction for non-attendance.
17. Jobcentre Plus will work with hosts to manage the delivery of the programme. Jobcentre Plus also has the option to broker placements through local and/or national intermediaries.
18. Jobcentre Plus will be responsible for:
 - sourcing suitable Work Experience placements;
 - entering into Service Level Agreements;
 - identifying and matching eligible customers to placements;
 - providing support to both the host and participant during the placement;
 - ensuring compliance with relevant conditionality;
 - providing appropriate support post-placement; and
 - assuring employers confirm that they meet relevant legislation prior to placement.
19. Participants will remain on Jobseeker's Allowance and be subject to all existing conditionality requirements such as actively seeking work, being available for employment, and attending regular face-to-face interviews at Jobcentre Plus, for the duration of their placement. Funding will also be available to cover travel and childcare costs arising as a result of the placement.

What is the rationale for introducing a Work Experience programme focused on young people?

20. The youth labour market is highly dynamic, the age at which young people leave education varies across the youth population (and over time), and there are a number of different transition pathways. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) recently published a thematic review, *Jobs for Youth* which looked at multiple school-to-work transition pathways across OECD countries. Very few young people settle straight into career employment after leaving education; many young people move in and out of the labour market or between jobs before settling into stable employment, and

only a small minority struggle to make the transition from school to work.¹

21. This is supported by data showing that the majority of young people who make a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance leave quickly – around 60 per cent of 18-24 year olds making a new claim for Jobseeker's Allowance leave within three months, and 80 per cent leave within six months². However, there exists a small minority of young claimants who continue to struggle to find work.
22. The small minority who find it difficult to make the transition from school to work (estimated to be around 5 per cent of young people leaving education³) may need support in finding a job to prevent them from becoming long-term unemployed or withdrawing from the labour market.
23. Unemployment rates are highest for young people and decline with age. There are a number of explanations for perpetually higher youth unemployment rates, and not all of them are negative. For example, a young person might have a number of short spells of unemployment after leaving education whilst they gain experience and 'shop around' for an appropriate job. However for some young people a lack of skills and work experience can make them less marketable to employers. This group can be particularly vulnerable where there is strong competition for jobs. The relatively high level of unemployment caused by the recent recession has led to increased competition in the labour market, particularly in areas with weaker labour demand.
24. It is important to note that a lack of work experience in itself is not necessarily a barrier to work. Many young people leaving education will not have prior work experience, but will be able to find employment opportunities on the strength of their skills and qualifications. Similarly many employers recruiting young people directly from education would not expect them to have had prior work experience – particularly employers recruiting for apprentices, running graduate schemes or offering other training schemes. This support will not be routinely available to young people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for less than 13 weeks; rather it will be targeted at those who genuinely need support and therefore avoids paying for support for people who would find work just as quickly without it.
25. In addition, some young people face multiple and complex barriers to work and a lack of work experience may not be their main barrier. Those for whom a lack of work experience is the key barrier to work should be prioritised (as they will benefit the most).

¹ OECD social, employment and migration papers, no.106 *Rising youth unemployment during the crisis: how to prevent negative long-term consequences on a generation?* (2010)

² Off-flow rates calculated using JSA stocks and flows data from NOMIS.

³ OECD *Jobs for Youth*

26. The latest National Employer Skills Survey for England found that the majority of employers who had recently recruited a young person aged 16-24 directly from education found them to be well or very well prepared for work. However, of those who reported that young recruits were poorly prepared, the most commonly cited reason was 'poor understanding of the working world' (by just over half of employers critical of work readiness of young recruits). The longer young recruits had been in education, the better their work readiness was perceived to be by employers.⁴ This suggests that a lack of work experience may be more of a problem amongst young people with less education.
27. A 2009 survey of employers by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development found that the main barriers to recruiting young people are a lack of experience (72 per cent) and the availability of more suitable candidates (65 per cent). A third of respondents said that young people have poor soft skills or poor attitude (31 per cent).⁵
28. Therefore the evidence suggests that there is a small minority of young people who struggle to make the transition from school to work, and for some young people within this group, a lack of work experience can be a significant barrier to work (particularly when combined with low skills).
29. Given the limited resources available, additional funding for Work Experience is targeted on areas in Great Britain that are likely to benefit most from an increase in the share of private sector employment. We have identified 14 areas as particularly vulnerable – covering 12 local authorities, and around 40 per cent of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants. Jobcentre Plus will target any additional funding for Work Clubs, Work Experience, Service Academies and New Enterprise Allowance at these areas. There may be discretion to also offer opportunities in other areas, subject to available resources.
30. Given the shortcomings of using data from local authority districts (owing to commuting patterns frequently being wider than these boundaries), this has been determined at NUTS 2 level using the following basket of indicators:
 - The proportion of the economically active population employed in the public sector
 - The number of private sector jobs per capita
 - And the public sector share of Gross Value Added

⁴ http://www.ukces.org.uk/upload/pdf/NESS%20Key%20findings%202009_2.pdf

⁵ CIPD Labour Market Outlook, August 2009: http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/B825A8B2-7022-4D8A-B321-1AB38F1999B2/0/Labour_Market_Outlook_summer_09.pdf

31. Work Experience will be targeted in areas that are identified according to two or more of the above indicators⁶. The list of target areas identified is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Target areas

Target Areas (NUTS2)	Local Authorities covered
Tees Valley and Durham	County Durham, Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees
Northumberland and Tyne and Wear	Sunderland, Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside
Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre
Merseyside	Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton, St. Helens, Wirral
South Yorkshire	Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield
Devon	East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, Plymouth, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torbay, Torridge and West Devon
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	Cornwall, Isles of Scilly
Highlands and Islands	Argyll & Bute, Eilean Siar, Highland, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands
West Wales and the Valleys	Anglesey, Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda, Cynon, Taff , Swansea, Torfaen
South West Scotland	Dumfries & Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire , Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire
East Wales	Cardiff, Monmouthshire, The Vale of Glamorgan, Newport, Flintshire, Powys, Wrexham
Eastern Scotland	Angus, Clackmannanshire, Dundee City, Falkirk, Fife, Perth & Kinross, Stirling, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Midlothian, Scottish

⁶ More than 20% of the economically active population employed in the public sector (GB average=18.8%); less than 380 private sector employees per 1000 residents aged 16+ (GB average=444); public sector (public admin, education, health) accounts for 20.4% or more of GVA (GB average=17.1%).

	Borders, West Lothian
West Midlands	Birmingham, Solihull, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton
Lincolnshire	Boston, East Lindsey, Lincoln, North Kesteven, South Holland, South Kesteven, West Lindsey

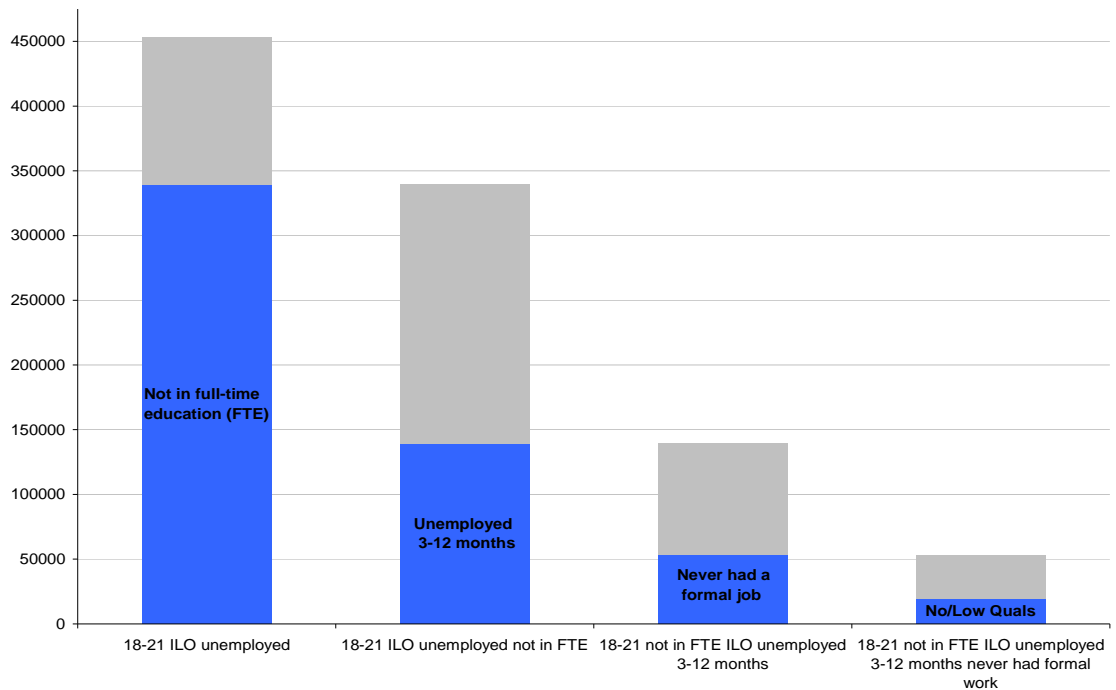
How many people do we expect to be covered by the policy – who will benefit?

32. It is not possible to precisely estimate how many people will benefit from Work Experience. Although the Department for Work and Pensions collects administrative data on the number of young people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, information about previous work experience, skills and qualifications is not recorded. Therefore it is not possible to provide accurate information on the number of young people aged 18-21 claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for whom a lack of work experience acts as a significant barrier to work.
33. The Labour Force Survey includes questions on the level of qualifications held by individuals, and a specific question relating to whether respondents have ever had a paid job or a place on a scheme⁷. This information can be used to give an indication of the proportion of young people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for whom a lack of work experience may be a barrier to work.
34. The chart below presents data from the Labour Force Survey on the number of young people aged 18-21 who are International Labour Organisation unemployed, not in full-time education, who have been unemployed for 3-12 months, and who have never had a formal job and have no or low qualifications⁸.
35. Chart 1 shows that the number of young people aged 18-21 who have been unemployed for 3-12 months, who report that they have never had a paid (formal) job is a relatively small proportion of all unemployed young people. The proportion with no or low qualifications is even smaller. This suggests that the target group for Work Experience will be a very small proportion of young claimants aged 18-21.

⁷ This excludes casual and holiday jobs, which we would expect to be the main source of work experience for the majority of young people leaving education, so is most likely to over-estimate the number of young people with no work experience.

⁸ 'No or low qualifications' are defined as young people who report that the level of their highest qualification is below Level 2 or equivalent, or they have no qualifications.

Chart 1: Number of young people aged 18-21, unemployed for 3-12 months, who have never had a paid job and have no or low qualifications



Source: Labour Force Survey (average Q3 2009 to Q2 2010)

36. If we assume that the profile of young Jobseeker's Allowance claimants is the same as International Labour Organisation unemployed young people not in full time education, this suggests that around 6 per cent of young claimants aged 18-21 have never worked *and* have no/low qualifications, and this figure is around 14 per cent for those unemployed for 3-12 months.
37. Over the past year (October 2009 – September 2010) around 550,000 18-24 year olds made a new claim to Jobseeker's Allowance in the target areas, and the youth claimant count has averaged around 173,000. Of this, the number of young people who have been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for 3-12 months has averaged around 73,000.
38. Table 2 below sets out the average youth claimant count (18-24 year olds), and the number claiming between three and 12 months for each of the target areas. There is considerable variation between areas, due to differences in population size.

Table 2: The average youth claimant count (18-24 year olds), and the number claiming between 3 and 12 months for each of the target areas

Target Area	Total youth claimant count	Young people claiming JSA for 13-52 weeks
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	2,710	966
Devon	5,888	2,157
Highlands and Islands	1,662	618
Lancashire	9,670	3,560
Merseyside	14,823	6,033
Northumberland and Tyne and Wear	13,042	5,414
South Western Scotland	21,836	9,323
South Yorkshire	13,551	5,830
Tees Valley and Durham	12,399	5,391
West Wales and The Valleys	16,778	6,994
East Wales	8,838	3,724
Eastern Scotland	13,978	5,755
West Midlands	33,113	15,493
Lincolnshire	4,773	2,108
Total NUTS2 Target Areas	173,060	73,365

Source: NOMIS

Impact on different groups

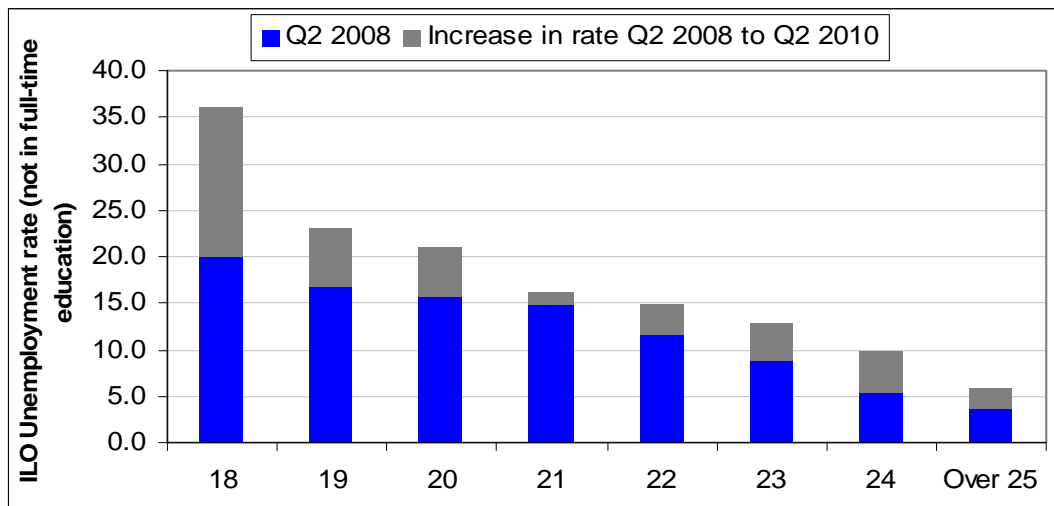
39. This section considers the impact of Work Experience in terms of race, gender, disability, age, religion, and sexual orientation. Where data is available this has been included to give an indication of which groups may be more likely to access Work Experience.

Age

40. The recession has contributed to a significant rise in youth unemployment, and the rise is greatest for the very youngest (this can be seen in the graph below). With current levels of unemployment still relatively high, there is increased competition for jobs and young people who lack work experience may find it harder to compete in the labour market. This is why Work Experience is focused on 18 to 21 year olds, and why it is targeted in areas with weaker demand for labour.

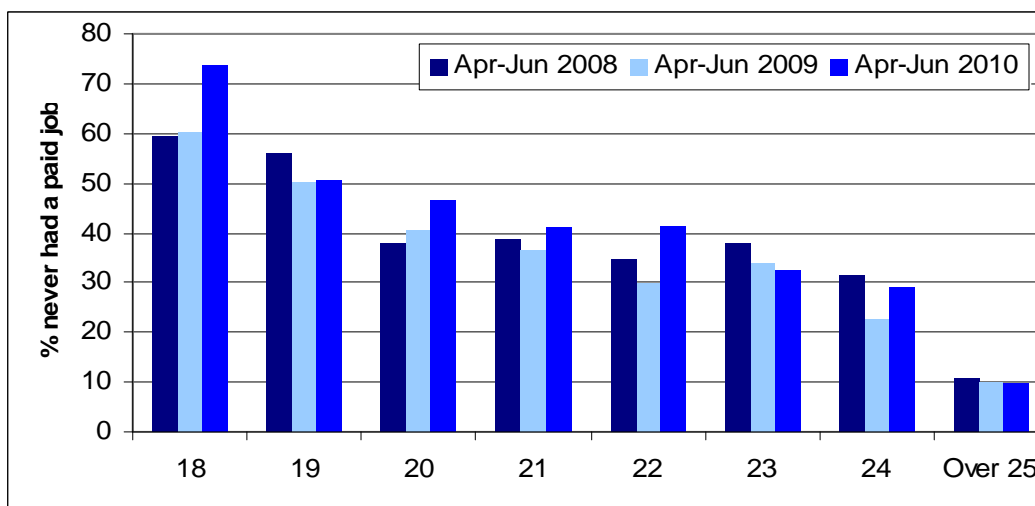
41. International Labour Organisation unemployment rates are highest for young people, and young people have seen the largest absolute rise in their International Labour Organisation unemployment rates since the start of the recession. This is shown in chart 2 below.

Chart 2: International Labour Organisation unemployment rate (not in full time education)



Source: Labour Force Survey

Chart 3: Labour Force Survey – Percentage never had a paid job



Source: Labour Force Survey

42. Chart 3 shows the proportion of young people who report that they have never had a formal paid job (excluding casual or holiday jobs). The proportion of young people who have never had a paid job declines with age (unsurprising since the youngest within the group

are the most likely to have recently left education and not had a 'proper' job yet).

43. Since the youngest are most likely to have little formal work experience, this policy will be targeted at 18-21 year olds.
44. Chart 4 below shows the proportion of young people who are in the target group (have never had a formal job and have no or low qualifications) by age group and duration of unemployment. This shows that a greater proportion of 18-21 year olds fall into the target group for this policy, and that the proportion in the target group increases with duration of unemployment.

Chart 4: Labour Force Survey – Proportion in target group



Source: Labour Force Survey (average Q3 2009 – Q2 2010)

Gender

45. Young males are over-represented in the youth claimant population, reflecting the fact that young males are more likely to be unemployed and claiming Jobseeker's Allowance in general. This is true across the country as a whole, and in the target areas.
46. Table 4 shows that 31 per cent of young people making a claim to Jobseeker's Allowance over the past year are female, and 29 per cent of the average youth claimant count between three and 12 months in the target areas is female. This is similar to the national average, and the proportions are similar across all target areas. The female share of in-flows is very slightly higher than the share of the stock of young people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance between three and 12 months, this suggests that a slightly higher proportion of young women may leave Jobseeker's Allowance before three months.

Table 3: Females as a proportion of youth in-flows, and 3-12 month stock

	Females as % total youth in-flow Oct 09 - Sep 10	Females as % young people claiming 13-52wks
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	32	28
Devon	33	28
Highlands and Islands	31	30
Lancashire	30	28
Merseyside	32	29
Northumberland and Tyne and Wear	31	29
South Western Scotland	31	28
South Yorkshire	31	29
Tees Valley and Durham	29	27
West Wales and The Valleys	31	28
East Wales	32	28
Eastern Scotland	31	28
West Midlands	33	31
Lincolnshire	33	31
Total NUTS2 Target Areas	31	29
GB AVERAGE	33	30

47. Given that the majority of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants are male, we would expect the majority of young people accessing Work Experience will also be male.
48. Jobcentre Plus will seek to source a range of Work Experience placements based on the needs of the individual, as outlined in the participants Jobseeker's Agreement.
49. Although a smaller proportion of females claim Jobseeker's Allowance, the policy will be designed to ensure that female claimants will have equal access to Work Experience opportunities, including a variety of trades and occupations without focusing on industries that are predominantly male dominated, such as construction.
50. In order to ensure equality to access, funding will be made available to cover travel and childcare costs arising as a result of Work Experience.
51. In addition, we will be considering whether to extend Work Experience from late 2011 to lone parents on Income Support.

52. Labour Force Survey analysis shows that nationally females account for 37 per cent of all International Labour Organisation unemployed 18-21 year olds not in full time education, but they make up only 33 per cent of the Work Experience target group (unemployed 3-12 months, never had a formal job, and have no or low qualifications). Therefore a lack of work experience combined with no/low qualifications is more common amongst unemployed men.

Race

53. Table 5 below provides data on the number of young people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance by ethnicity across the target areas, and in comparison to the Great Britain average.

Table 4: Youth claimant count by ethnicity

	Ethnic minorities as % total youth in-flow Sep 09 - Aug 10	Ethnic minorities as % young people claiming 13-52wks
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	1	1
Devon	2	2
Highlands and Islands	0	0
Lancashire	9	9
Merseyside	4	4
Northumberland and Tyne and Wear	2	2
South Western Scotland	2	2
South Yorkshire	8	8
Tees Valley and Durham	2	2
West Wales and The Valleys	1	1
East Wales	6	6
Eastern Scotland	1	1
West Midlands	29	29
Lincolnshire	2	1
Total NUTS2 Target Areas	8	9
GB AVERAGE	13	13

Source: NOMIS

54. Over the past year ethnic minorities have accounted for 8 per cent of all youth in-flows to Jobseeker's Allowance, and 9 per cent of the average number of young people claiming Jobseekers Allowance for between 13 and 52 weeks. This is a little below the national average (13 per cent), and there is considerable variation across target areas. This reflects differences in local populations. Data from the Labour Force Survey show that 13% of all young people aged 18-21 in the UK are from ethnic minority groups.

55. Target areas tend to be more rural (particularly those in the South West and parts of Scotland and Wales), and include few urban conurbations with large ethnic minority populations (with the exception of the West Midlands).
56. Labour Force Survey analysis shows that 11 per cent of International Labour Organisation unemployed 18-21 year olds are from ethnic minority groups, and 12 per cent of the Work Experience target group are from an ethnic minority group. In other words, the proportion of the target group from ethnic minorities is similar to the total unemployed population, and similar to the total population of 18-21 year olds in the UK.
57. Therefore we would expect the majority of Work Experience participants to be white, although the proportion of young people with no work experience and no/low qualifications is similar for white and ethnic minority groups.
58. Jobcentre Plus is committed to ensuring that in the delivery of services and products, they are offered in a way that is appropriate and accessible, meet individual needs, enables equal access for all and meets Diversity and Equality legislation requirements.
59. Jobcentre Plus is able to demonstrate our commitment by:
 - promoting equality of opportunity and diversity within the communities in which we work and with all our partners and workforce.
 - building in legislative requirements and best practice to all our service delivery and employee policies and procedures, and supporting these with appropriate training and guidance.
60. Every person working for the Department has a personal responsibility for implementing and promoting these principles in their day-to-day dealings with customers, with each other and with partners. Inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable.
61. Jobcentre Plus will also measure and report on the effectiveness of our service delivery and employee policies and processes in relation to these principles, by building performance monitoring and management information requirements into policy and product development. This information will be used to inform future policy and to enhance business processes.

Disability

62. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on employers or providers to make reasonable adjustment to accommodate any additional needs of a person with disabilities to prevent them being at a disadvantage.

63. Having considered the impact of this on Work Experience policy the emphasis falls on what is reasonable. It is unlikely that hosts would consider complex adjustments to support Work Experience - the Secretary of State has an obligation to organise what is reasonable in all the circumstances and the ability of the host to work around the adjustment practically will be one such factor. For example hearing loops can be made available through the Department for Work and Pensions on a short term loan basis. The department may, however, consider it not practical to provide expensive Information Technology packages such as “Dragon” for two weeks work experience. This could clearly lead to unequal access for jobseekers with certain disabilities. In mitigation, Work Choice may be available to customers for whom other Department for Work and Pensions provision is not appropriate. Work Choice will contain elements of work experience without the attached Jobseeker’s Allowance conditionality.
64. In addition, to ensure that all customers are treated equally, the Department does not seek to sanction where it is obvious that the customer does not comprehend why a sanction is being put in place.
65. Initiatives such as Getting A Life and Project Search provide evidence which shows that young people with learning disabilities in particular can benefit from work based training or placements. Learning new skills on the job is important because this group often find it difficult to transfer classroom based skills to new environments. With the right support from job coaches and using techniques such as systematic instruction, for example, breaking down the elements of a task or job, people with learning disabilities can get and sustain real paid jobs. More widely these experiences can help to change attitudes in the workplace and encourage employers to take on people with disabilities.
66. Labour Force Survey analysis shows that people with disabilities account nationally for 10 per cent of all International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployed 18-21 year olds not in full-time education. Given small sample sizes it is not possible to provide data on the proportion of people with disabilities in the Work Experience target group. If we look at the proportion of all young unemployed 18-21 year olds not in full-time education who have no work experience and no/low qualifications (regardless of duration), ILO figures show that 34 per cent of unemployed people with disabilities report that they have no work experience and no/low qualifications, compared to 18 per cent of unemployed people who do not have disabilities. Figures also show that 15 per cent of all unemployed 18-21 year olds not in full-time education who lack work experience and qualifications are people with disabilities.⁹

⁹ Sample sizes used for these estimates are above the minimum suggested for reporting by Office for National Statistics, but are nonetheless small and as such should be treated with caution.

- 67. This suggests that a greater proportion of unemployed people with disabilities have no work experience and no/low qualifications, which could indicate a greater need for Work Experience from this group (although a lack of work experience may not be their main barrier to work).
- 68. Evidence from the *'Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study'*, Department for Work and Pensions Research Report 491, shows people with shorter term health conditions were most likely to use Work Experience as a stepping stone into mainstream work. Work Experience (unpaid) was the most popular mandatory option in an intense activity period programme.
- 69. The same proportion of jobseekers unemployed for three months or more have a disability in target and non-target areas.
- 70. Table 6 below shows the proportion of 18-21 year olds reaching the three month threshold for 18-21 year olds split by disability in target and non-target areas.

Table 5: proportion of 18-21 year olds reaching the three month threshold for 18-21 year olds split by disability in target and non-target areas

Disability		
	Yes	No
Target	89%	11%
Non-target	89%	11%

Source National Benefits Database

The figures in the above table are based on 18-21 year olds reaching three months claiming JSA between April 2009 and March 2010. Age is based on those who are 18-21 years old at the three month threshold. Disability is self-reported using a marker on the Jobcentre Plus client database.

Religion or belief

- 71. There is no data on the religion or belief of customers who will be eligible. However the religion or belief of the participant could affect the take-up of Work Experience.
- 72. The host's policies, rules and procedures may indirectly discriminate against particular beliefs and we would therefore encourage the host to make reasonable changes. The host is not required to enter into significant expenditure to meet religious needs, but in most instances the need will involve little or minimal financial expenditure, such as a host accommodating time and space to pray.

73. The timing of religious holidays, ceremonies and festivals can also have an impact. The participant may request to amend their Work Experience for religious reasons. For example, Jewish employees may ask to leave early on Fridays and Muslim employees may ask for time off on Fridays to attend prayers. We would advise for the host to consider all requests seriously and allow such requests whenever possible.

Impact on staff

74. No equality related impacts effecting Jobcentre Plus staff have been identified.

Evaluation

75. As one of the Get Britain Working strands, data recorded on Work Experience will be built into the overarching assessment of pre-Work Programme support, in line with the new Jobcentre Plus Performance Framework. The Framework moves Jobcentre Plus away from a culture of multiple targets to one focussed on performance in the round. Significantly, the framework also prescribes more local devolution and flexibility for both delivery and performance management. As such there will be a light touch approach towards central Get Britain Working evaluation, examining:

- flows off benefit and into employment (Accountability against the Spending Review 2010 four year Labour Market expectation)
- the quality of customer experience, as well as delivery volumes and
- the value for money and productivity story

76. Due to the flexible nature of the approach to Get Britain Working delivery, our current working assumption is that no targets will be set for Work Experience. The management information collected will be used to account for public spend, enable performance improvement and inform evaluation.

77. The Work Experience evaluation strategy is currently in development and, subject to resource and data, might seek to answer the following questions:

- Delivery – How are Jobcentre Plus and host businesses delivering Work Experience? What are the customer and employer experiences of delivering the measure and how are employers performing? What are the key operational lessons learnt from the delivery of the measure?
- Monitoring – What are the destinations of customers on the Work Programme? How fast are customers flowing off benefit and in to work?

- Impact & Value for Money – What is the impact of the Work Experience on job entry, retention, benefit off-flows and job additionality? How cost-effective is Work Experience?
78. Such an evaluation would incorporate both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Interviews could be conducted with Work Experience participants for the customer perspective and with host businesses and appropriate Jobcentre Plus staff, to gather evidence on the delivery of Work Experience. This could be supplemented with information from a customer/participant survey. Further options could be considered to determine the employment impact of the Work Programme and its cost-effectiveness.
79. Our commissioning note has requested that Jobcentre Plus collect and report upon, on a monthly basis, placement starts and ends (in month, cumulative and by Jobcentre Plus district). This will enable us to assess, in real-time, the take-up and attractiveness of the provision to customers and advisers.
80. For the wider evaluation of Work Experience we have also requested that Jobcentre Plus collect management information on:
- **Outcomes:** This will enable us to evaluate how successful the Work Experience has been in moving people in to employment, further education or training.
 - **Length of placements:** Information on both the length of placements and how long people spend on their placements. When matched with destination information, this will enable us to assess whether there is a correlation between placement length and outcome. It will also enable us to assess the effect of continuing conditionality, by allowing us to see if a person leaves their placement earlier than expected to move into work.
 - **Characteristics of host businesses:** Information on size, sector and number of placements offered (in month and cumulative): This will enable the identification of the types of host businesses participating and help us to better target communications and marketing activity.

Consultation and involvement

81. A number of internal and external consultation events have been held and outcomes have been used to formulate policy development. For example Princes Trust, Skanska and Business in the Community run similar work experience opportunities for young people. They have found that holding “enthusing” days where a number of potential participants are invited along to information sessions with employers often on the employer premises improves commitment from both parties. This has been incorporated into advice and guidance for District Managers offering them suggested practice on the way they might want to use their flexibilities to set up referrals.

82. A number of key themes have emerged from our consultation with stakeholders.

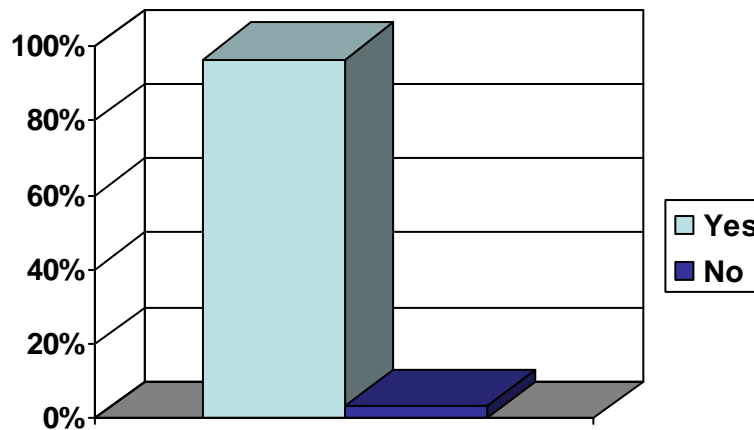
- **Promoting a sense of independence and ownership to the individual:** An employment programme involving work experience should promote real job experience.
- Essential that individual is encouraged to develop sense of growing independence and self pride and feels empowered over their own future and choices.
- **Building confidence pre-scheme:** Should be additional provision pre-placement to build confidence and motivation to prepare individuals for Work Experience options. This could help to overcome personal barriers through loss of confidence, ambition or motivation. Once operational, awareness sessions involving employers and individuals who had successfully participated could promote benefits of the scheme to those considering taking part.
- **Manage expectations of individual and be honest about what can be expected from Work Experience.** Make it clear to participants the placement is about CV build, rather than the guarantee of a permanent job at the end of the placement. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of employability skills and responsibilities of employment, such as timekeeping, maintaining a presentable appearance, etc.
- **Encouraging employers:** Use right pitch with employers. They are saturated with employment programmes and schemes, so think about what will make them want to take part in this one. Acknowledge employers' contributions to getting individuals work ready; this will ensure they remain engaged with the programme and continue to offer opportunities.
- **Manage expectations of employers,** where participant subject to full benefit conditionality could potentially leave placement to take up employment, which could be a disincentive to employers who will be putting time and effort into providing an opportunity for what they thought was an agreed duration.
- **Removing operational barriers from participation:** Ensure that if operations are to be devolved to Jobcentre Plus to meet local needs then give Jobcentre Plus real power to truly operate to local demand, whatever the demand may be.
- **Ensure complete flexibility,** avoiding a 'one size fits all' approach. Allow duration of placements to fit individual requirements, rather than impose a time bound element.
- **Matching candidates to the right placement:** Careful matching needs to be in place – the right person in the right placement gives them the chance to become invaluable to that business and increase their chances of being kept on permanently once the work experience placement is over.

Customer/Claimant issues:

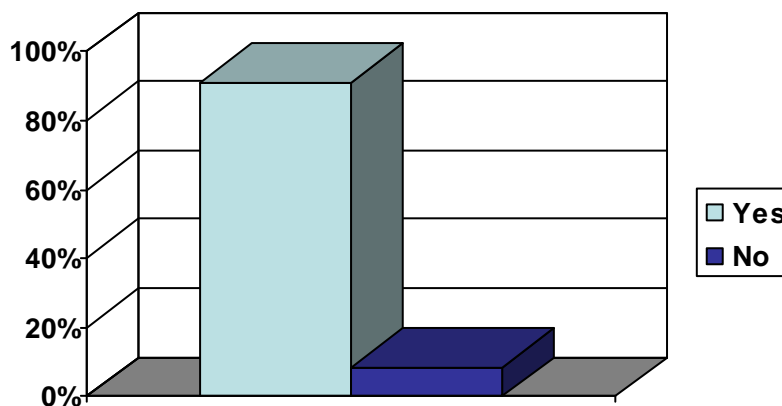
83. Fifty-eight customers were interviewed in September 2010 to get their views on work experience. The customers were aged between 18-21, and had been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for at least 13 weeks. Interviews were undertaken at Lewisham, Birmingham, Leeds and Liverpool Jobcentre Plus offices. The top three benefits of work experience were ranked as:

1. increased employability
2. gained insight into a chosen employment sector
3. increase in confidence

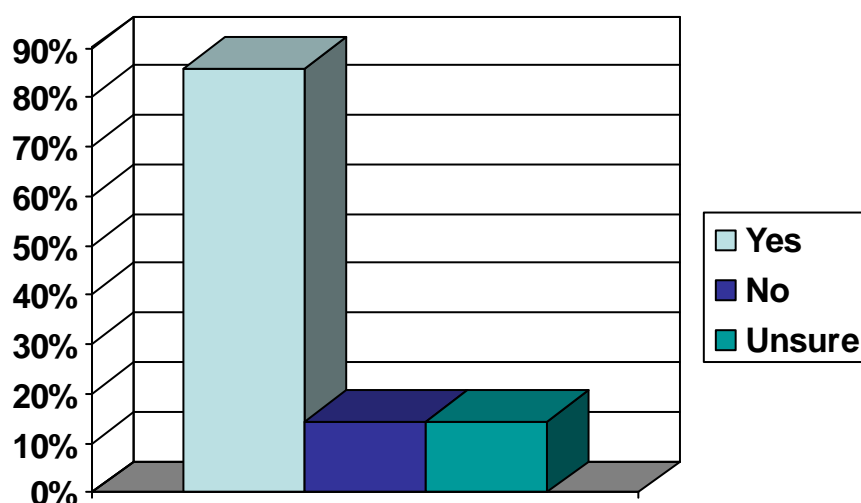
Graph 1: 96 per cent said they would be happy to continue jobsearch while on a work experience placement.



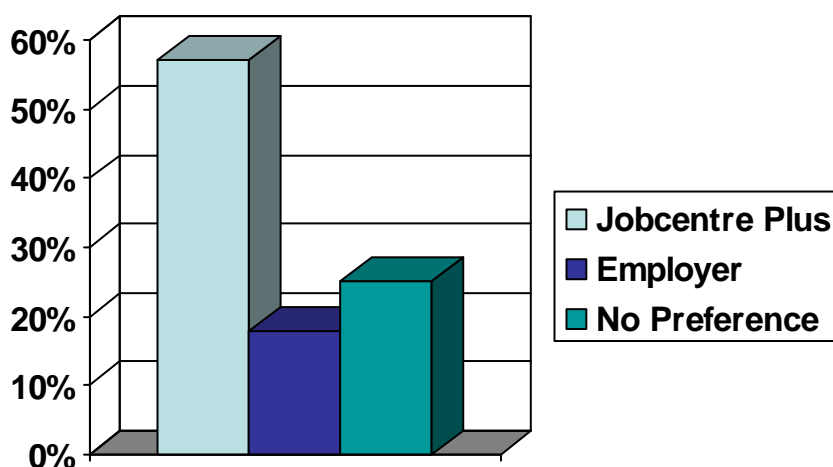
Graph 2: 91 per cent agreed that a period of work experience would be a worthwhile addition to their CV and help them find paid employment.



Graph 3: 86 per cent said the use of sanctions would encourage them to attend and complete a Work Experience placement once this was an agreed option.



Graph 4: 57 per cent said they would prefer to be paid their benefit through Jobcentre Plus while on the placement, to ensure consistency and continuity of payment.



Conclusion

84. The current economic climate has resulted in increased competition in the labour market with more unemployed people competing for jobs. Young people with a lack of skills and work experience may find it more difficult to market themselves to employers, particularly in areas with weaker labour demand.
85. A lack of work experience is itself not a barrier to employment, as many young people leaving education will not have prior work experience, but will be able to find employment opportunities on the strength of their skills and qualifications. Similarly many employers

86. Work Experience will be part of a package of additional support options delivered by Jobcentre Plus to help individuals into work, prior to referral to the Work Programme.
87. Work Experience will offer 18-21 year old unemployed people a period of work experience between two and eight weeks in length. To maximise effectiveness Work Experience opportunities will be targeted at those customers who are furthest from the labour market (for example low or no skilled, never worked, ex-offenders, customers with disabilities), particularly those who want to work but find a lack of experience a barrier.
88. In conclusion, young people who successfully complete Work Experience are more likely to obtain a greater insight to the working environment. With this in mind Work Experience should improve the employment prospects of the participant, providing young customers with the skills and experience to make the smooth transition into work.

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