



The Work Capability Assessment

A call for evidence – tell us what you think

August 2011



Easy Read

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

Important

Maroon writing

In this easy-read booklet we sometimes explain what words mean.

The first time we mention any of these words, it is in **bold maroon** writing. Then we write what the words mean in a **light purple** box. If any of the words are used later in the booklet, we show them in **normal maroon** writing.

These words and what they mean are also in a Word List at the back of the booklet.

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What this booklet is about

The Department for Work and Pensions asked Professor Malcolm Harrington to look at how the **Work Capability Assessment** is working.

Work Capability Assessment

This is when people talk to a health expert about their health and how it affects them. And if they could move into work or if they should get the Employment and Support Allowance.

Employment and Support Allowance

This is a benefit for disabled people and people who have a health condition. People will get this benefit if they do not have a job and they cannot work at all, or cannot work now but could work some time in the future.

Asking people what they think about the **Work Capability Assessment** is just one of the ways Professor Harrington will use to see how it is working.

We started to ask people what they think about the **Work Capability Assessment** on 14 July 2011. We will stop asking people what they think on 16 September 2011.

What Professor Malcolm Harrington says

I am pleased that the government has asked me to look again at how the **Work Capability Assessment** is working. This is the second time I have looked at the **Work Capability Assessment**.

Last year we had 400 replies from lots of different people and groups. Those replies helped us to write last year's report and I hope we get lots of replies this year.

Last year I found out that the **Work Capability Assessment** is the right way of finding out if people should get the **Employment and Support Allowance**. I also said the **Work Capability Assessment** was not working as well as it should do.

This year I want to ask questions that will help us to make the **Work Capability Assessment** better and fairer.

I look forward to hearing what you think.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malcolm Harrington". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Professor Malcolm Harrington

What you need to know

The Employment and Support Allowance and the Work Capability Assessment

The **Employment and Support Allowance** began in October 2008. It is for disabled people and people with a health condition.

The **Work Capability Assessment** looks at people's health. It shows if people should go into a **support group**, a **work related activity group** or if they are fit for work.

Support group

This is a group of people who will not be expected to work but can get help to find work if they want it.

Work related activity group

This is a group of people who may be able to work in the future. They will get help to get ready for work.



The first review of the Work Capability Assessment

The first review of the **Work Capability Assessment** was carried out by Professor Malcolm Harrington in 2010. A report was written in November 2010.

The first review found out that the **Work Capability Assessment** was not working as well as it should do.

The review gave some ideas for making the **Work Capability Assessment** better. The government agreed with all the ideas to make the **Work Capability Assessment** better.



The second review of the Work Capability Assessment

Professor Harrington has agreed to carry out the second review of the **Work Capability Assessment**. He will carry out a programme of work that the first review came up with.

The things people say during this second review will help Professor Harrington to come up with more ideas to make the **Work Capability Assessment** better.



Our questions

Question 1

Have you seen any changes in the way the **Work Capability Assessment** works because of what was said in the first review.

If you have seen any changes, what changes have you seen?

- A** The way the **Work Capability Assessment** works has got better.
- B** The way the **Work Capability Assessment** works has stayed the same.
- C** The way the **Work Capability Assessment** works has got worse.
- D** I am not sure if there have been any changes.

Your answer

Please answer A, B, C or D and tell us anything else.

Question 2

Are there any other areas of work that you think we should look at next year? If yes what should we look at?

- A** Big areas of work.
- B** Small areas of work.
- C** No other areas of work.
- D** I do not know.

Your answer

Please answer A, B, C or D and tell us anything else.

Question 3

When should we stop making changes to the **Work Capability Assessment** system and look at the changes we have already made to make sure they are changing things the way we want them to.

- A** Do not stop making changes until the **Work Capability Assessment** is perfect.
- B** Make a few more changes and then wait to see how they affect the **Work Capability Assessment**.
- C** After making changes this year it will be time to see how the changes have affected the **Work Capability Assessment** before any more changes are made.
- D** I do not know.

Your answer

Please answer A, B, C or D and tell us anything else.

Question 4

Last year we looked at how important the face-to-face assessment was. Do you think we have got that right now?

- A** No, the face-to-face assessment is still treated as too important.
- B** The balance between the face-to-face assessment and the rest of the **Work Capability Assessment** process is just about right.
- C** No, it has gone too far. The face-to-face assessment is not treated as important enough.
- D** I do not know.

Your answer

Please answer A, B, C or D and tell us anything else.

Question 5

Do you have any strong evidence about the face-to-face assessment processes and outcomes which will help us to give advice about changes to make in the future.

Your answer

Please tell us what strong evidence you have.

Question 6

Do you know of any worries about the face-to-face assessment. If you do, what are these worries about?

- A** The way health experts act and the way they carry out assessments.
- B** The health experts understanding of health conditions.
- C** The report created during the assessment and the computer support of the assessment.
- D** All 3 of these reasons.
- E** I do not know.

Your answer

Please answer A, B, C, D or E and tell us anything else.

Question 7

Have heard about any worries to do with the computer support for the **Work Capability Assessment**. If yes, do you have any strong evidence about how this affects the **Work Capability Assessment** in a bad way?

Your answer

Please tell us what strong evidence you have.

Question 8

Should we change the way we show and explain the face-to-face assessment. We would do this by making it clear what it involves and what the assessment has to do with work capability.

- A** It is urgent to show and explain the face-to-face assessment in a different way
- B** The face-to-face assessment should be shown and explained in a different way but it is not urgent.
- C** I am not sure if the face-to-face assessment should be shown and explained in a different way.
- D** There is no need to show and explain the face-to-face assessment in a different way.
- E** There is definitely no need to show and explain the face-to-face assessment in a different way.

Your answer

Please answer A, B, C, D or E and tell us anything else.

Question 9

What 1 thing would you change about the **Work Capability Assessment** to make it more fair and better?

Your answer

Please tell us what you think.

How to reply to this call for evidence

Please send your replies or questions in one of these ways.

Send an email to wca.evidence@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Post your replies or questions to

WCA Independent review Team
Floor 2
Section B
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

Your replies must reach us by **16 September 2011**.

Word list

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