

Work Programme referrals, attachments and Jobseekers Allowance sanctions

July 2012

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Introduction

This publication contains statistics on the number of referrals and attachments to the Work Programme, by Customer Group, and the number of individuals with a Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) sanction applied for failing to participate in the Work Programme between June 2011 and January 2012.

The figures in Tables 1 and 2 provide an additional level of detail to the current set of Work Programme statistics.

Official statistics on referrals and attachments to the Work Programme are published at:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=wp>

The figures can be viewed by using the DWP tabulation tool which allows users to produce their own bespoke tables of referrals and attachments to the Work Programme. Figures can also be viewed graphically by using the data visualisation tool. These tools can both be accessed using the link above.

National Statistics on JSA sanctions, which also allow users to produce their own tables, are available at:

<http://83.244.183.180/sanction/sanction/LIVE/tabtool.html>

Background

Work Programme was launched throughout Great Britain in June 2011. It provides personalised work-focused support for people who are long-term unemployed or who are at risk of becoming so. It is delivered through 40 contracts held by 18 Private, Public and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) claimants are referred to the Work Programme at specified points in their claims, depending on their circumstances. In England only, people who receive incapacity benefits who have not yet been reassessed for ESA and people who claim Income Support (IS) are also eligible to volunteer for the Work Programme. There are separate arrangements outside the Work Programme for these claimants in Scotland and Wales, commissioned and administered by the devolved administrations. Pension Credit claimants are also eligible to volunteer for the Work Programme.

If a claimant fails to undertake any activity required as a condition of their participation on the Work Programme without good cause, then a doubt may be raised against their claim. These doubts are referred to the DWP Sector Decision Makers (SDMs). Once the SDM has made a decision on whether to sanction or disallow/allow a referral, they enter their decision on a system called DMAS (Decision Making and Appeals System). The decision is also sent back to the Jobcentre Plus office for entry to LMS (Labour Market System) and JSAPS (JSA Payment System) which then makes the appropriate changes to the actual payment to the customer.

Guidance for providers on how to deliver the Work Programme can be found at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/supplying-dwp/what-we-buy/welfare-to-work-services/provider-guidance/work-programme-provider.shtml>

Headline figures

- Claimants are referred to the Work Programme by Jobcentre Plus. The total number of referrals to the Work Programme from 1st June 2011 to 31st of January 2012 is 565 thousand.
- Following the referral of a participant to a Work Programme provider, that provider is responsible for contacting the participant to discuss the programme and begin planning the steps needed to support them into sustained employment. Once this activity has taken place, the provider registers an 'attachment' to the Work Programme. The total number of attachments to the Work Programme from 1st June 2011 to 31st January 2012 is 519 thousand.
- Latest statistics show 91 thousand referrals for JSA sanctions were made and completed by the end of January 2012 where claimants failed to participate in the Work Programme. Of these, 33 thousand resulted in an adverse decision; 34 thousand received a favourable decision and 25 thousand were cancelled or reserved to be reviewed/ applied on a future benefit claim.

Difference between referral and attachments

The statistics on referrals record the number of eligible claimants referred to the Work Programme by Jobcentre Plus. A claimant remains on the Work Programme for 2 years from the date of their referral to the programme. The statistics on attachments record the number of people with whom a provider has completed initial engagement activity. Since attachment activity must take place following a referral, at any given date, the number of attachments will be lower than the number of referrals. In addition, there will be a proportion of claimants who either sign off benefit or move into work after referral but before the point at which the provider has completed engagement activity with them. Evidence from figures collected so far suggests that on average 96% of referrals are attached to the Work Programme within 3 months of being referred.

Customer Groups

There are 23 separate "Customer Groups" into which claimants can be referred, based on their circumstances at the point of referral and the benefits that they receive.

Table 1 Number of Work Programme referrals and attachments by Customer Group: 1st June 2011 to 31st January 2012

Customer Group	Referrals	Attachments
Total	564,850	518,990
JSA 18-24	108,460	98,690
JSA 25+	269,070	250,620
Pension Credit	30	30
JSA Early Access	5,910	5,170
JSA NEET	16,430	14,460
JSA Claiming 22 of 24Mths	112,890	106,220
JSA ExIB	2,080	1,880
ESA (c) WRAG Mandatory	1,580	1,060
ESA (c) WRAG Voluntary	1,470	810
ESA Credit Only	70	60
ESA (IR) WRAG 12Mth Mandatory	2,460	1,350
ESA (IR) WRAG 12Mth Voluntary	2,750	1,330
ESA (IR) WRAG 3/6Mth Stock	1,220	1,020
Pension Credit - Health Issues	10	10
ESA (IR) WRAG 3/6 Mth Mandatory	34,630	31,380
ESA (IR) WRAG 3/6 Mth Voluntary	580	450
ESA (IR) Support Group	150	130
ESA (c) Support Group	60	40
ESA (IR) WRAG 3/6 Mth Mandatory ExIB	3,030	2,590
ESA (IR) WRAG 3/6 Mth Voluntary ExIB	160	110
ESA (IR) Support Group ExIB	40	30
ESA (c) Support Group ExIB	70	50
IB/IS ESF Volunteer	1,690	1,470

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate (IGS)

Notes:

1. Figures are cumulative and rounded to the nearest ten.
2. Referrals shown are 'net' referrals which do not include rejections, cancellations or referrals to ESA information sessions.
3. Attachments are the date of the first engagement activity between the provider and the participant as recorded on the payment administrative system.
4. Customer groups are assigned by Jobcentre Plus, on the basis of a claimant's circumstances, and benefit they receive. A small number of claimants appear in an incorrect group caused by the way information is recorded on the administrative system.

Table 2 Number of Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) sanctions applied for Failing to Participate in the Work Programme: 1st June 2011 to 31st January 2012

	Total
Number of sanctions applied	32,820
Number of individuals with a sanction applied	22,260

Source: DWP Information Directorate: JSA Sanctions and Disallowance Decisions Statistics Database

Notes:

1. Figures are cumulative and rounded to the nearest ten.
2. The number of sanctions applied is the number of referrals where there has been an adverse decision.
3. Failing to Participate in the Work Programme is a fixed length sanction
4. Fixed length sanctions: A sanction of between 1 week and 26 weeks is imposed for refusal, without good cause, to attend an employment programme or carry out a Jobseeker's Direction. Payment of benefit continues in full pending the Adjudication Officer's decision on a sanction question.

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