



The Work Programme (2011–2017 +2 year tail) UK Government - Department for Work and Pensions

POLICY LEARNING
FORUM

Vocational training
for the long-term unemployed

Learning from inspiring
practices

Thessaloniki, Greece
15 and 16 June 2017



CEDEFOP
European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

What it is

- ▶ A programme for those at risk of long-term unemployment. It is the biggest of its kind the UK has ever seen
- ▶ In 2010, the UK Coalition Government sought to improve programme performance. It replaced prior programmes with a more aggressive reform effort under the Work Programme (WP).
- ▶ Working with the private and voluntary sector
- ▶ Delivered by 18 prime providers who were awarded 40 separate contracts to deliver services in 18 large Contract Package Areas across England, Scotland and Wales.
- ▶ Advanced “payment by results” model: An ‘outcome-based commissioning’ approach encourages commissioners to focus on ends, not means, and is seen as a way of promoting improvements in public services.
- ▶ The so called “Black box” approach allows providers considerable flexibility in deciding what interventions would best help participants into sustainable employment and gives room for innovation. It allows each provider to design their own offer for each job seeker and use additional support offered by specialist providers as needed. This means minimum service prescription by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- ▶ A key performance management mechanism used by DWP is ‘market share shift’ (MSS) which gives DWP the flexibility to move 5% of new referrals within each Contract Package Areas (CPA) from lower to higher performing prime providers.
- ▶ MAXIMUS, one of DWP’s providers, uses Integrated Employment Services model with ‘Progress2Success’ customer journey, a structured approach into work supported by guides, training modules, and workshops that comprise three phases — Secure, Start, and Succeed. This service delivery model takes into consideration an understanding that every customer is an individual, often with complex, and sometimes fluctuating, needs.

How it works

The Work Programme is an integrated package of support providing personalised work- focused help for a wide range of benefit claimants in the UK. The support is delivered by public, private and voluntary sector organisations, working under contract to Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). These organisations tailor services to what works best for the individual benefit claimants in helping them back in to sustained work.

The focus of the Work Programme is on supporting participants to achieve sustained employment. Participants are supported by the Work Programme for two years. Providers receive job outcome payments when a participant has been in work for either three or six months, depending on the participant’s circumstances.

Once a job outcome payment has been paid, providers will receive sustainment payments for each subsequent continuous four-week period the participant spends in employment up to a maximum of two years, depending on the participant’s circumstances.

With the Work Programme coming to an end in autumn 2017, the DWP is proposing a new initiative, the Work and Health Programme. It will provide specialised support for those unemployed for over two years and, on a voluntary basis, to those with health conditions or disabilities. The programme will target people who with specialist support are likely to be able to find work within 12 months and be run by service providers awarded contracts by the government. The Work and Health Programme is part of the wider package of support outlined in the Government’s Work, Health and Disability Green Paper: Improving Lives (2016).

Who is involved

1. Department for Work and Pensions
2. JobCentre Plus (Public employment service) (coordination/lead)
3. Providers (private, third sectors, local authorities, NGOs, etc.)
4. Employers (CBI, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

More information

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On the web

<https://www.gov.uk/moving-from-benefits-to-work/job-search-programmes>

(Information on the Work Programme)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564038/work-and-health-green-paper-improving-lives.pdf

(Government’s Work, Health and Disability Green Paper: Improving Lives, published in 2016)

<https://www.maximusuk.co.uk>

(Maximus website)